



Partnering for Progress

US 50 Corridor East



US 50 Corridor East Tier 1 Final Environmental Impact Statement and Record of Decision

Tier 1 Draft Environmental Impact Statement
Public Hearing Transcripts

December 2017

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TIER 1 DRAFT ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACT STATEMENT

PUBLIC HEARING

July 11, 2016

11:30 a.m.

Las Animas Municipal Golf Course
220 Country Club Drive
Las Animas, Colorado 81054

1 MR. DAN DAHLKE: All right, thanks everybody
2 for coming, we're going to get started.

3 My name is Dan Dahlke, I'm a resident
4 Engineer with CDOT, based out of Pueblo, I have been
5 working on this project for about two years, and now I
6 would like to introduce Rob (indicating).

7 MR. ROB FREI: So I am Rob Frei, I am the
8 Environmental/Regional Planning Manager for this section
9 of the State, and like Dan I have been working on this
10 project for a couple of years as well, so we'll answer
11 your questions the best we can.

12 MR. DAN DAHLKE: All right. So kind of the
13 format -- you have kind of already seen a little bit --
14 we have got boards placed up around all over the place,
15 so after the presentation you're more than welcome to
16 stand up -- anyone that's part of the team please raise
17 your hand -- you can ask any of these people a question
18 and we'll try and get you the answer you have after this
19 (indicating).

20 So we're going to do it, like I said, a brief
21 presentation, then we're going to do public hearing. So
22 if you would like to after the meeting you can sign up,
23 your comment will be recorded by our court reporter. If
24 you would like to provide a comment verbally, it's fine.
25 Also we have a comment box in the back, you are more

1 than welcome to write that up, and, then, also you can
2 e-mail them or call in on those numbers as well
3 (indicating). And the website's on a flyer in the back.

4 Next slide.

5 So project history. There was a Corridor
6 Selection Study that happened in -- around 2000 that
7 addressed the -- saw that we needed to improve mobility
8 along the corridor, which then recommended that we start
9 into the NEPA process, which we started in on the Tier
10 EIS, which began in 2006, and actually a draft document
11 just came out in June.

12 Next slide.

13 So as you can see, the Notice of Intent
14 started in 2006, we had scoping and public involvement
15 in 2006, we had an Alternatives and Environmental
16 Analysis in 2010. Right now we're -- we're in the
17 45-day comment period, which is in June 2016.

18 After we receive all the comments and they're
19 addressed the next step will be is we'll have a combined
20 Tier 1 EIS and a Record of Decision -- or a ROD -- which
21 we're expecting that will be sometime in 2017, from
22 there we'll move on to a Tier 2 NEPA process.

23 So basically the Tier 1 allows us to move
24 into a Tier 2, and a Tier 2 will all be based on
25 funding, so we'll have smaller projects that will be

1 based on that.

2 Next slide.

3 So why, why did we do a Tier E -- EIS
4 process. Basically the project -- as you can tell, it
5 goes all the way to Kansas, it's a huge process(sic) --
6 or a huge project; it also gives us a better
7 understanding of what's going to happen, both positive
8 and negative, on all the selections that we've had.

9 Studying the entire corridor at once will let
10 us set up mitigation strategies, and also using the
11 Tiered NEPA process allows Environmental Analysis to
12 shape the public transportation planning decisions,
13 along with input from agencies, from the public.

14 Next slide.

15 So as you know US 50 -- the section that
16 we're studying is down in the orange all the way from --
17 basically I-25 all the way to the vicinity of Kansas.
18 It's a major hub, serves as a local, regional, and
19 national transportation hub; and also serves as the main
20 street, as you are well aware, of nine local communities
21 here in Southeastern Colorado.

22 So zooming in a little bit closer. This is
23 our study area, so basically the whole -- that big
24 yellow swath is what we looked at. So any -- it varied
25 from 1 to 4 miles wide, and, you know, as I said before,

1 Pueblo all the way to the vicinity of Kansas state line.

2 One big thing you want to note -- and
3 probably we will repeat this a couple of times -- is
4 that we excluded the Lamar reliever route, that had its
5 own Environmental Assessment that was completed, and,
6 so, that area we actually took -- took out of our study
7 area.

8 MR. GREG KOLOMITZ: May I ask why? Or maybe
9 not now, but later.

10 MR. DAN DAHLKE: Yeah. Yeah. Yes. Yeah.

11 MR. GREG KOLOMITZ: Okay.

12 MR. DAN DAHLKE: Good question. Good
13 question, so . . .

14 So the purpose of the project really is --
15 what -- what we based it on was to improve safety and
16 mobility. As you can see with the pictures, there's --
17 it's a multi-use highway, you know, we've got a lot of
18 tractor -- truck traffic, tractor, farm equipment, so
19 forth.

20 Safety issues along the corridor and data we
21 compiled as part of the document from 2008 to 2012,
22 approximately 330 crashes annually from Pueblo to the
23 Kansas line. This crash data was actually relatively
24 higher compared to other state av -- averages of similar
25 corridors. Several factors that we saw was limit --

1 limited passing opportunities, frequent changes in road
2 design characteristics, and in -- and inadequate clear
3 zones.

4 Next slide.

5 So along with that we've -- the safety
6 part, the mobility part was inadequate mobility along
7 the corridor has been cited as a factor that limits
8 economic development and -- which is caused by -- a lot
9 of it's caused by conflicting needs of the local,
10 regional, and long-distance user, so those combined
11 users of different types are really causing issues along
12 that. This project seeks to improve mobility for all
13 users by balancing mobility and access needs, all while
14 providing flexibility to meet future -- future travel
15 needs.

16 Next slide.

17 So the alternatives development process
18 used, we looked at -- we looked at basically four steps.
19 So the first step is we looked at the regional corridor
20 location and that yellow swath that you saw in the first
21 slides, so we looked at a north swath, which was
22 basically 1 to 10 miles north of the existing alignment;
23 and then we looked at the existing alignment, which was
24 on or near the existing alignment; and we had a south
25 option, which was basically 1 to 10 miles south of the

1 existing alignment. So in that first step we selected
2 the existing location 'cause it basically better served
3 the local and regional users.

4 So step two we looked at different types of
5 transportation modes. We asked ourselves the question
6 what types of modes of transportation improvements will
7 meet the needs of the corridor, so we looked at rail,
8 bus, carpooling/transportation system management,
9 and -- and also highway. So on that one, rail, bus, and
10 the carpooling slash transportation system management
11 failed to address the mobility for all use -- users and
12 provide flexibility for future traffic needs, so we
13 selected the highway option on that.

14 The third step we took a look at was what
15 type of facility, so basically using the existing
16 highway with passing lanes, so a partial rebuild; a
17 two-lane highway with passing lanes where we totally
18 rebuild the whole alignment, another option where it was
19 a four-lane with a partial rebuild; four-lane rural
20 expressway, which was with a total rebuild; and a
21 four-lane freeway. So looking at all of those facility
22 types we selected the four-lane rebuild, because if we
23 did the partial rebuild -- the -- the -- or the
24 freeway -- there would be limited turning movements
25 and -- with all the county roads and stuff, so local

1 users trying to get across Highway 50 it would -- it
2 would prove -- you know, not be good for them.

3 The fourth step that we looked at was through
4 or around town, and, so, we asked a question what
5 transportation improvements would be made through the
6 communities along the corridor or around them.

7 So the through-town corridors were eliminated
8 from consideration because of the impact it would have
9 to local mobility, balance mobility for all users, and
10 flexibility to address future traffic needs; and the
11 around-town corridors would better meet the project's
12 purpose and need, and minimize impacts to the community.
13 So we're really afraid of really -- you know, put this
14 big four-lane section through the town what would it do
15 to the towns.

16 Next slide.

17 So the alt -- alternative analysis was
18 conducted to determine which al -- realignment would
19 have the least environmental impacts, so, you know, we
20 looked through NEPA as that we always have to consider a
21 no-build as a comparison with the build alternatives.
22 The no-build alternative would -- includes ongoing
23 maintenance of the pavement and bridges of the existing
24 alignment, it also includes minor safety improvements,
25 pro -- provisions for passing lane sections, routine

1 pavement overlays, repair of any weather- or
2 crash-related damage, and accommodates local
3 improvements by local agencies to the US 50 corridor.

4 Next slide, please.

5 So -- and the identified preferred
6 alternative. The sections of preferred around-town
7 route was(sic) also based on the Effects Analysis
8 conducted for three environmental categories, which was
9 the rural and agricultural, natural, community and
10 built, and Rob will get more into that analysis
11 next. Consideration for the quan -- quantity of the
12 resources impacted, along with the quality, allowed the
13 study to determine the significance of the impact. The
14 results of the study led to recommendations on the
15 corridor locations around each community.

16 So let's look at those. So we're going to do
17 them county by county.

18 So in Pueblo County, just east of I-25, we
19 had three options, one was the Pueblo Airport to the
20 north -- sorry, I forgot the pointer -- the 47
21 connection, and then the existing alignment. The
22 existing section of US 50 along Pueblo is already
23 developed as a transportation corridor, while other
24 alternatives would fragment agriculture and prairie
25 habitat. Due to the significant less impacts the

1 existing alignment would have compared to the other
2 section of builds -- so on this section we actually
3 selected the existing alignment, so you can see it's
4 green. So the red were the two that we eliminated, and
5 the green is our preferred; and you can't really see in
6 the background, but the orange is kind of the existing
7 alignment.

8 There's one more section which we're calling
9 the "Fort Reynolds," which is basically the turnoff to
10 Boone, on that one we -- we looked at going to the north
11 and, then, swooping down into the south, and, then,
12 building along the existing alignment. So both
13 alignments have similar impacts to rural and
14 agricultural environment, and the natural environment,
15 the difference is Alternative 2 would improve safety,
16 and minimize potential impacts to the community and
17 built environment, so that's the one we selected on
18 that.

19 And also the Fowler, so -- that was in the
20 next county.

21 Next slide.

22 So in Otero County we had two options in
23 Fowler, going to the north and going to the south. So
24 one would -- basically it would be before the golf
25 course and, then, coming back in east of town

1 (indicating). Alternative 1 would have fewer impacts to
2 agricultural, while Alternative 2 would have fewer
3 impacts to the natural environments, and each had
4 comparative(sic) -- comparable effects on the community
5 and built environment. Basically at this location why I
6 put them green, both the impacts were similar, so we did
7 not select an alternative in Fowler. So when we go to
8 the Tier 2 we'll actually make a decision based on that.

9 On the Manzanola same thing, we had one to
10 the north, one to the south, we selected the north
11 alignment. Both alternatives were fairly compare --
12 comparable, however, Alternative 1 would result in fewer
13 potential effects to agricultural produc --
14 productivity, community and a built environment.

15 And then in Rocky Ford same thing, we had
16 a -- a north alignment and a south alignment. You can
17 see the south alignment basically dropped straight down
18 and, then, headed across. So Alternative 1 was selected
19 because it had greater potential to minimize effects to
20 historic resources, and received greater community
21 support during the screening process because the route
22 is closer to the town of Rocky Ford.

23 Then also the same thing with Swink, you'll
24 see we have two alternatives. This was another section
25 where we did not make a selection because they were both

1 comparable in their ability to meet the purpose and need
2 of the project, and both have their advantages to the
3 town of Swink. No preferred route was selected at this
4 location, therefore, the built alternative will be
5 carried forward -- forward until further analysis in the
6 Tier 2.

7 In La Junta we actually had four
8 alternatives, one to the north and three to the south.
9 Basically the three to the south it just had a --
10 different rings of trying to get around different
11 properties and so forth. The one to the north would
12 actually be the most environmental-damaging route
13 because it would re -- require construction through a
14 major floodplain, which you're all very familiar with,
15 it was eliminated from consideration because the three
16 other south alternatives generally lacked major adverse
17 effects; and actually we've selected the second one,
18 which is not quite as far to the south, it's the
19 shortest, closest to town, and better meets the purpose
20 and need.

21 And in Bent County two -- two alternatives
22 were looked at around Las Animas, a north and a south.
23 The Las Animas north had major access advantages that
24 could alleviate potential social and economic effects of
25 a bypass, combined with lesser environmental impacts, so

1 of the two alternatives Alternative 1 was preferred.

2 And then as we discussed, as you can see
3 we've taken out the Lamar section, which was already
4 studied as part of the 287/US 50 Lamar reliever route.

5 So we had two options in Granada as before, a
6 north and a south, we selected Alternative 2, which is
7 to the south, because it has slightly less natural, and
8 community and built environmental impacts.

9 And then in Holly same thing, a north and a
10 south. Alternative 2, which is the south alternative,
11 was identified as the preferred alternative because it
12 has fewer environ -- environmental impacts to the
13 natural, and community and built environments; and,
14 also, this alternative improves the access to 289 with
15 50.

16 All right, so benefits of the improvements.
17 As you know we're hoping to increase safety, increase
18 mobility for all users; we'll hopefully have increased
19 passing opportunities, improve should -- shoulders,
20 fewer speed reduction zones, and faster travel -- travel
21 times.

22 And underneath you'll see our typical section
23 which we preliminarily identify, which would be similar
24 to I-25 with a 4-foot inside shoulder, two 12-foot
25 lanes, a 10-foot shoulder, then a 12-foot clear zone is

1 what we identified as our impacts.

2 MR. ROB FREI: Thanks, Dan.

3 I am going to go over the environmental
4 resources we evaluated through this process, so kind of
5 have them identified here in four different categories,
6 we've got agricultural resources, community and built
7 environment, the natural environment, and, then, other
8 resources that don't fit into any of those other three,
9 so I'll go through each of those in the next few slides.

10 But before I do that, just to give you some
11 background on how we identify the amount of impacts to
12 these different resources. So for resources such as
13 rangelands, agriculture, riparian, our -- our approach
14 was we used a 1,000-foot study area, our actual
15 footprint would be about 250 feet, so we just assumed
16 whatever that resource was in that corridor we'd impact
17 25 percent of it. So during our Tier 2 level review we
18 would look at opportunities to either avoid, mitigate,
19 and -- and minimize impacts to -- to -- to those types
20 of resources. So when we move forward on these slides
21 we'll -- it really gives you the worst-case.

22 The other thing to keep in mind for resources
23 such as history, they're a lot more stagnant, don't
24 move, if they're within the 1,000-foot corridor we just
25 counted it. So we didn't count just the

1 corridor -- the cultural, archaeological -- we -- we
2 counted up all those resources. So when we move forward
3 you -- you'll see they'll be a little more inflated.
4 Like I said, the -- our Tier 2 documents we'll actually
5 be able to look at -- in this example up here pretend
6 those would be wetlands, we might be able to squeak a
7 route or a corridor past -- past the resources and not
8 have any impact, so that's what we'll do during Tier 2
9 (indicating).

10 So the first ones we'll look at is
11 agricultural impacts. This is on -- again, along the
12 150-mile long corridor. We have four feedlots along US
13 50, six produce markets, and then we have 24 canals and
14 ditches -- irrigation canals and ditches along the
15 corridor.

16 Farmlands ranges(sic) from 2,866 to
17 3,407(sic) -- sorry -- 3,047 acres of potential impact.
18 And, again, the range there is due to not selecting the
19 north or south locations at Swink and Fowler.

20 And then rangelands has a range between 1,790
21 and 2,380 acres that could potentially be impacted.

22 For the natural environment, wetland and
23 riparian, we have a pretty big range there, 587 to 713
24 acres. Most of those are actually riparian, not wetland
25 impacts. We looked at a very high level, we didn't do

1 detailed delineations.

2 Wildlife habitat, 40 -- 4,287 to 4,564 acres
3 could potentially be impacted. Keep in mind that kind
4 of double counts your rangelands, which is(sic) wildlife
5 habitat, it includes the wetland and riparian, and,
6 then, it also includes a couple state wildlife areas --
7 which we'll talk about -- we could potentially impact.

8 Geological and paleontological resources.
9 There are four active mining operations along the
10 corridor, they're all sand and gravel quarry operations,
11 and then there's six geological formations that occur
12 along the routes. There are no known paleontological
13 resources identified at this level, but there's six
14 formations that potentially could harbor paleontological
15 resources, when we get into design or actual
16 construction that -- that's -- when you know is when you
17 actually hit them, so -- but we've identified six
18 potential areas.

19 The next one is historic, and community and
20 built environment. The historic resources, you've got a
21 range from 60 to 79 historic resources. So while that's
22 high, keep in mind that 23 to 27 -- or 20 -- 24 of these
23 are irrigation ditches and canals which we just have
24 determined are potentially eligible as a historical
25 resource, so those are included there.

1 We have 14 to 17 bridges on US 50 that are
2 along the corridor that are potentially eligible as
3 well, so that includes those.

4 It also includes a couple of large linear
5 resources, the Santa Fe Trail that goes through the
6 area, and the BNSF Railroad is also eligible as a
7 historic resource.

8 The -- the remaining resources is a mix of
9 businesses, primary residences on the routes around
10 town, and, then, buildings associated with historic
11 ranches, so . . .

12 Archaeological resources. We've got nine
13 known archaeological sites along the corridor, those
14 are -- really occur in two locations, one is between
15 Pueblo and Fowler, and the other one is between La Junta
16 and Las Animas.

17 And then for land use we have 13 properties
18 that have conservation easements, and then we have 10
19 public properties along the corridor. The public
20 properties include state wildlife areas, the John Martin
21 Reservoir; a couple pedestrian trails in Holly, Granada;
22 the Fowler golf course; and, then, it also includes
23 indirect impacts to the Comanche National Grasslands, to
24 Boggsville National Historic Site, and, then, Bent --
25 Old Bent's Fort. So those could come in the form of

1 change in access to those resources.

2 And then park lands and rec lands, a lot of
3 repeats there. Again, it's the golf course, John Martin
4 Reservoir, state wildlife area. There's four birding
5 trails that use US 50 as their route. And, then again,
6 you've got two planned trails in Granada and Holly; and
7 then there's a small potential clip in the Granada
8 School District as well.

9 Other resources that we looked at. So
10 transportation as -- as a benefit: we would increase
11 mobility and safety along that corridor, the whole
12 purpose and need of -- of our project here.

13 Hazardous materials. We've identified 162
14 hazardous materials sites. What those include is -- it
15 can include Wal-Mart, it can include fueling stations,
16 it can include farmer co-ops, anything that holds or
17 sells hazardous materials.

18 And then Section 4(f) is a
19 transportation-specific law requirement that provides
20 additional protection to public parks and recreation,
21 historic resources, and archeological resources, so
22 those are identified up here, they do have an added
23 protection under the law (indicating).

24 And then here are the list of resources
25 that -- that we also looked at that don't have the same

1 level of impact on us, so social and economic,
2 environmental justice, water quality, climate change,
3 aesthetics, visual, air quality, traffic noise, and
4 energy.

5 So that's a summary of the broad view high
6 level of the environmental impact, so that really
7 concludes the -- the meat of the -- the presentation, so
8 we'll go over the next steps again.

9 Comments received today and through the rest
10 of the comment period, which ends a couple weeks from
11 this Friday, July 29th, will be addressed in the Tier 1
12 Final EIS and Record of Decision, after that we'll go
13 into looking at NEPA -- our Tier 2 NEPA projects, when
14 we actually have construction -- so we'll actually start
15 getting into a lot more detail, but they'll be smaller
16 projects -- and, then, once we get that completed we'll
17 go into project final design and -- and actual
18 construction.

19 So you can provide your comments several
20 ways. One way is to speak your public comment right
21 after this presentation in the public hearing format.
22 Other ways, you could speak to the -- to the transcriber
23 privately, she'll be available here, or you can write
24 your comments, submit it in the comment box in the back,
25 or you can mail or e-mail those comments to us and --

1 and we will address them (indicating).

2 And finally -- I think finally -- how to
3 provide your verbal comments for tonight. If you would
4 like to stand up, speak here and have your comments
5 noted in the public hearing format we ask that you sign
6 in at the sign-up sheet --

7 MS. ANDREA GARCIA: I have that here
8 (indicating).

9 MR. ROB FREI: -- it's over here, Andrea's
10 holding it up there (indicating). We'll give you about
11 five minutes or so to do that.

12 Then you guys can come up here, we'll give
13 you three minutes time to make your comments, ask your
14 questions, there's no deferring of your time to someone
15 else, and, of course, please be respectful.

16 Also please clearly state your -- your name
17 and -- and where you're from before beginning your
18 comment so we know how to address your comment in the
19 Tier 1 FEIS -- Final Environmental Impact Statement and
20 Record of Decision.

21 So we'll leave this last slide up in case you
22 want to write it down for the project website or for
23 the e-mail -- your -- your comments to the Atkins e-mail
24 address there.

25 So we'll give it about five minutes, that way

1 anybody that wants to come up here and speak in a public
2 hearing format, we'll -- we'll get started here in about
3 five minutes.

4 MS. ANDREA GARCIA: Right, and I'll just put
5 the sign-up sheet in the back on the table (indicating).

6 UNIDENTIFIED MALE SPEAKER: What about the
7 questions, do we need to sign up?

8 MR. ROB FREI: Yes, so -- good -- good
9 question. So after we go -- get through the public
10 hearing format, you saw the multiple CDOT and Atkins
11 folks that are around here, we can address your question
12 one-on-one (indicating). Anything you ask us out -- out
13 on the floor that's not in the -- one of the formats
14 that we've talked about won't be identified in the final
15 document, but, yes, you're more than welcome, we're here
16 till 2:00.

17 UNIDENTIFIED FEMALE SPEAKER: If you want to
18 ask a question and you want it recorded you have to do
19 the comments.

20 UNIDENTIFIED MALE SPEAKER: What about if you
21 just want clarification, do you need to sign up?

22 UNIDENTIFIED MALE SPEAKER: Yeah.

23 UNIDENTIFIED MALE SPEAKER: What about
24 questions?

25 MR. ROB FREI: So questions and answers will

1 not be in the public hearing format, you will -- we will
2 have CDOT and Atkins consultants that will be roaming
3 around that will address your comments, if you have a
4 specific question you need to ask it on the microphone
5 here.

6 MR. MARTY McCUNE: Specific questions might
7 be relevant to everybody in the room is the point,
8 so . . .

9 MR. ROB FREI: No, I absolutely agree with
10 that, but that's the way the NEPA process works, is you
11 can ask a question, we take our time, we address it in a
12 public format appropriately and, then, that gets put
13 into the actual document, the Final EIS/ROD -- Tier 1
14 EIS and ROD for public consumption, it becomes part of
15 the public record.

16 So if you have a specific question please ask
17 it here, you have a sign-up sheet over there; if you
18 want something a little more off the record we'll be
19 floating around (indicating).

20 If you think of a question between now and
21 then please pick up a comment form and either e-mail it
22 to us, mail it to us, or drop it in the drop box.

23 Thank you.

24 UNIDENTIFIED MALE SPEAKER: Question?

25 MR. ROB FREI: We can ask questions, we're

1 not going to do it in a public format here.

2 UNIDENTIFIED MALE SPEAKER: You just gave
3 them mixed messages. I don't know, maybe I didn't hear
4 you the second time. You gave a mixed message, we're
5 going to take questions at the microphone, and then you
6 said no --

7 MR. ROB FREI: No.

8 UNIDENTIFIED MALE SPEAKER: -- that's a mixed
9 message.

10 MR. ROB FREI: No, you can ask a question and
11 we will answer your question in the final document
12 that's going to be published in about six months to a
13 year from now, if you have other questions that you
14 don't want in the public hearing format or part of the
15 public record we will be floating around for the next
16 couple of hours.

17 UNIDENTIFIED MALE SPEAKER: Okay.

18 MR. ROB FREI: Okay?

19 MR. KERRY FRITZ: I think everybody wants it
20 on the public record, we want to discuss it openly and
21 not individually and, then, have a person to respond.

22 I have -- I have one question. Where's the
23 money coming from?

24 MR. ROB FREI: That's a good question, we can
25 talk about that after.

1 MR. KERRY FRITZ: Well, I think everybody
2 wants to know where the money's coming from. Does
3 anybody want to know where the money's coming from?

4 MR. ROB FREI: We'll give you five minutes
5 to -- I would be happy to answer that question.

6 MR. KERRY FRITZ: I know where the money's
7 coming from, I want you to tell them (indicating). No,
8 you tell them where the money's coming from. Who you
9 are associated with.

10 MR. ROB FREI: I am associated with the
11 State.

12 MR. KERRY FREI: No, he's associated with the
13 same international group that's bringing in the -- the
14 immigrants that you don't want to live beside, okay?
15 They -- they -- apparently, according to the record,
16 they feel guilty, the Swiss, for staying neutral in
17 World War II. That's a bunch of crap.

18 I just came back from Europe, all those
19 people that are imported here are already in Europe
20 walking down four-lane high -- or two-lane highways as
21 en masse. I'm talking -- I'm talking five miles back
22 you can see people walking through Europe because
23 someone is advertising that the Swedish women want men,
24 okay (indicating)? Now, the Swedish women aren't --
25 aren't advertising that they want men, other than the

1 fake dating -- dating websites that the same people are
2 hiring them to do.

3 So this -- these people are not your friends.
4 They're -- they're -- they're Colorado residents, but
5 they're hired by international -- you don't know what's
6 going to happen two weeks after you approve anything,
7 they could fire these people, they're out on their cans,
8 and you get a bunch of international forces moving in
9 here telling you where to go.

10 I just got -- I'm all frickin' for the
11 future-- (inaudible) -- I just happened to end up in
12 this town, in this town. If you don't know where the
13 Las Animas familius is then you look back in history.
14 This is Las Animas, I am the Las Animas familius, in
15 other cultures I'm called by different names.

16 In Russia the Santa Claus doesn't wear a red
17 suit with an old lady, he has a green suit on with a
18 bunch of young ladies around, okay?

19 You're -- you're living in a future prophecy
20 basically --

21 UNIDENTIFIED MALE SPEAKER: Your three
22 minutes is(sic) up.

23 (A break was taken.)

24 MR. ROB FREI: All right, so I have -- we
25 have first on the list Mr. Wallace.

1 MR. TOM WALLACE: Do I need to come up there,
2 or can I just ask my question from here (indicating)?

3 MR. FREI: You -- you can -- I think it's --
4 as long as you're nice and loud, I think that's fine.
5 As long as the court reporter can hear you I think we're
6 good, so . . .

7 MR. TOM WALLACE: Okay.

8 MR. ROB FREI: Just -- just again keep in
9 mind we're not going to be able to answer your question
10 here.

11 MR. TOM WALLACE: Right.

12 MR. ROB FREI: I can an -- try to answer your
13 question afterward off the record, and then we'll
14 formally answer it in the FEIS/Rod document.

15 MR. TOM WALLACE: Is this okay?

16 MR. ROB FREI: Perfect.

17 MR. TOM WALLACE: Tom Wallace, I'm a Bent
18 County Commissioner. All I want to know right now --
19 (applause) -- is with this expressway is there
20 controlled access, or is it just like we are now? You
21 know, on -- on the expressway, what kind of access is on
22 the expressway?

23 MR. ROB FREI: So Dan Dahlke will be able to
24 answer that question for you offline --

25 MR. TOM WALLACE: Okay.

1 MR. ROB FREI: -- and then we'll answer it
2 formally in -- in the final document.

3 MR. TOM WALLACE: And then my other question
4 is what kind of build is an expressway, is it four lanes
5 together or are they separate lane -- or directions
6 separate (indicating)?

7 MR. ROB FREI: Okay.

8 MR. TOM WALLACE: So that -- on the width of
9 right-of-way --

10 MR. ROB FREI: Okay.

11 MR. TOM WALLACE: -- on that. Do I need to
12 ask him (indicating)?

13 MR. ROB FREI: We'll -- we'll answer your
14 question in the formal document and then, yes, we'll be
15 able to answer your question here in just a moment,
16 so . . .

17 MR. TOM WALLACE: Thank you.

18 MR. ROB FREI: Thank you.

19 The other person I have is a Mr. McCune.

20 MR. MARTY McCUNE: Okay, my name's Marty
21 McCune, from La Junta, Colorado. So the question I'm
22 curious about with these bypass routes around the town
23 is(sic) there going to be additional efforts put in to
24 create connections? Like, for instance, in La Junta
25 you're going south of town, there's a highway and San

1 Juan Avenue that goes south of town, I don't want either
2 of those in their current condition to be access
3 corridors into town unless they're improved as well,
4 so . . .

5 I -- and I work across all of Southeast
6 Colorado so I have the same question for every one of
7 these communities, because I know -- I'm assuming that
8 the old 50 will be a business route, but you're still
9 going to have other connections in each of these towns
10 that will need improvements, so . . .

11 MR. ROB FREI: Thank you.

12 Is there anyone else that -- it looks like
13 we've got a couple more folks, so I'll just let --

14 MR. GREG KOLOMITZ: You want me to sign up?

15 MR. ROB FREI: That would be great.

16 I'll have the next person come up and
17 introduce themselves. What is your name?

18 MS. LAURA HECKMAN: Laura Heckman, I live at
19 McClave, and we farm, and through this we would end up
20 losing our home and -- both homes, and also farmland,
21 and I didn't know how you guys handle that, because, you
22 know, the farmland --

23 MR. KERRY FRITZ: Bent County is a debtor,
24 I'm the secured-party creditor, I handle whatever you --
25 if you want to move out I'll take care of that.

1 MS. LAURA HECKMAN: Okay, let me continue.

2 And, so, I didn't know, again -- especially
3 with farmland you're losing your income, that farmland,
4 and, so, I didn't know how you're going to handle that.

5 Also I was just curious why was not 287
6 looked at, because that's where your heavy traffic is,
7 and I could see the real benefit for that to be a
8 four-lane because it has so much traffic on it and it's
9 already set up to be -- you know, for carrying traffic,
10 so that's why I was asking that question.

11 So -- and, then, also on historical, I
12 know -- we have a historical schoolhouse, and would that
13 just be -- it just -- yeah, 'cause it's going to be
14 right in the middle of the highway 'cause it's right
15 next to the highway, so . . .

16 Anyway, those are my questions.

17 MR. ROB FREI: Thank you.

18 I think we have another gentleman.

19 MR. GREG KOLOMITZ: Thank you. My name is
20 Greg Kolomitz, I'm from La Junta. I live in La Junta.

21 First of all, I appreciate the attempt today
22 to look at Southeast Colorado, that's a good thing I
23 guess.

24 I would like to state for the record that I
25 believe any project of this magnitude needs to include a

1 Economic Impact Study in terms of what the diversion of
2 traffic away from the existing corridors through the
3 towns along Highway 50 -- what that diversion of traffic
4 would mean to the communities in terms -- in terms of
5 economic impact, I would like that to be addressed.
6 Thank you.

7 MR. ROB FREI: Thank you.

8 Miss Pointon(sic)? Pointon?

9 MS. JENN POINTON: Pointon.

10 MR. ROB FREI: Pointon.

11 MS. JENN POINTON: My name is Jenn Pointon,
12 I'm a resident of Las Animas, a life-long resident of
13 Baca County, so . . .

14 One of my questions -- that has come up a
15 couple of times from my family and stuff -- is I know
16 that you guys are strictly for Highway 50 East in this
17 corridor, but is the same consideration going to be done
18 through the mountains, or is this just another way of
19 taking the rural and just kind of taking what you want,
20 so to speak? Because we are rural and we are a smaller
21 community and stuff like that.

22 Also, how is the -- I think he kind of
23 addressed it -- but how do you decide what the
24 socioeconomic impact is? Because like it was stated
25 before, we do depend on outside, of course, we can't

1 survive without them in these small communities, and by
2 diverting the traffic you're going to eliminate a lot of
3 the resources and the income that these communities
4 depend upon.

5 So those are my two questions, thank you.

6 MR. ROB FREI: Thank you.

7 I have Mr. Fritz.

8 MS. BRITTANY PAYTON: He just left.

9 MR. ROB FREI: Okay.

10 Is there anyone else that would like to
11 speak?

12 (No response.)

13 MR. ROB FREI: Okay. Well, thank you for
14 coming.

15 MS. ANDREA GARCIA: Oh, and -- do you just
16 want to say afterwards they can have a private . . .

17 MR. ROB FREI: Oh, yeah. So thank you for
18 coming.

19 Like I said, we will be walking around,
20 please stop us if we can answer some of the questions
21 that were asked here tonight -- or this -- this
22 afternoon the best we can, and then we'll address them
23 formally in -- in the document; and then if you have a
24 question that you want recorded you can have the
25 transcriber -- you can sit down with her and -- and she

1 can take your comment, we can address that as well
2 (indicating).

3 So thank you for coming.

4 (Presentation was concluded.)

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1 PRIVATE COMMENTS WERE TAKEN BY COURT REPORTER AS
2 FOLLOWS:

3

4 MR. RICK KLEIN: My name is Rick Klein --
5 K-l-e-i-n -- and I want to first say thank you to CDOT
6 for trying to improve Highway 50 East and making us a
7 part of Colorado by four-laning it, it'll improve the
8 safety, mobility, but also give us a chance economically
9 to compete with different communities in Colorado as far
10 as bringing companies in. We have had numerous
11 companies that won't even give us a look because we do
12 not have four-lane from I-25 coming out, and if we can
13 get this between 287 and I-25 on this corridor done I
14 believe that Southeast Colorado will be possible.

15

* * * * *

16 MR. MARTY McCUNE: Marty McCune from La
17 Junta. My preference would be that if they develop the
18 four lanes they do it in sections between the towns and
19 do the bypasses as the last bit around each town. So
20 basically develop the four-lane infrastructure in
21 between the communities and then do the bypasses as the
22 last step. That's it.

23

(End of private comments.)

24

(The proceedings were concluded at the hour
25 of 12:20 p.m.)

<p style="text-align: center;">1</p> <p>1 [13] - 1:1, 3:20, 3:23, 4:25, 6:22, 6:25, 11:1, 11:12, 11:18, 13:1, 19:11, 20:19, 22:13 1,000-foot [2] - 14:14, 14:24 1,790 15:20 10 [3] - 6:22, 6:25, 17:18 10-foot 13:25 11 1:4 11:30 1:5 12-foot [2] - 13:24, 13:25 12:20 33:25 13 17:17 14 17:1 150-mile 15:12 162 18:13 17 17:1 19th 34:11</p>	<p style="text-align: center;">A</p> <p>a.m. 1:5 ability 12:1 able [5] - 15:5, 15:6, 26:9, 26:23, 27:15 absolutely 22:9 access [7] - 6:13, 12:23, 13:14, 18:1, 26:20, 26:21, 28:2 accommodates 9:2 according 24:15 acres [4] - 15:17, 15:21, 15:24, 16:2 across [3] - 8:1, 11:18, 28:5 active 16:9 actual [4] - 14:14, 16:15, 19:17, 22:13 added 18:22 additional [2] - 18:20, 27:23 address [10] - 7:11, 8:10, 20:1, 20:18, 20:24, 21:11, 22:3, 23:14, 31:22, 32:1 addressed [5] - 3:7, 3:19, 19:11, 30:5, 30:23 advantages [2] - 12:2, 12:23 adverse 12:16 advertising [2] - 24:23, 24:25 aesthetics 19:3 afraid 8:13 afternoon 31:22 afterward 26:13 afterwards 31:16 agencies [2] - 4:13, 9:3 agree 22:9 agricultural [6] - 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TIER 1 DRAFT ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACT STATEMENT

PUBLIC HEARING

July 11, 2016

6:30 p.m.

Lamar Community Building
610 South 6th Street
Lamar, Colorado 81052

1 MR. DAN DAHLKE: All right, I would like to
2 thank everyone for coming. My name's Dan Dahlke, I'm a
3 resident Engineer with the Colorado Department of
4 Transportation, I'm based out of Pueblo --

5 MS. KATHY GARCIA: Closer to the mike.

6 MR. DAN DAHLKE: -- I'm from Pueblo, and I'd
7 like to introduce Rob Frei.

8 MR. ROB FREI: Hello, my name's Rob Frei, I'm
9 the Regional Environmental and Planning Manager that
10 helped with this NEPA document, I've been working on
11 this project for about two, two-and-a-half years.

12 MR. DAN DAHLKE: All right, so a little bit
13 about tonight's meeting. There's a document right over
14 here that's for -- if you'd like to review it, if --
15 there's also a lot of locations --

16 (Microphone turned on louder.)

17 MR. DAN DAHLKE: Thank you. Perfect. Yay.

18 There's a list of other locations where the
19 document's available. It's also available on our
20 website -- we'll post that at the end of the slide
21 show -- where you can also go and see the document.

22 There's comment forms also around the table,
23 so if you would like to comment you can provide a
24 written comment and stick it in the -- the box over
25 there (indicating).

1 We'll also give a -- a presentation, give
2 a -- verbal comment that will be given at the end of
3 this presentation that the court reporter will take your
4 comment; and also, if you don't want to give a verbal
5 comment you will able to do that with the court reporter
6 afterwards one-on-one if you would like to do that
7 (indicating).

8 Next.

9 So a little bit of project history. The
10 Corridor Selection Study was the beginning stages of
11 develop -- developing a corridor-wide vision for the
12 future of the highway, and was to improve safety and
13 mobility in the Lower Arkansas Valley -- Valley. The
14 study concluded that transportation improvements are
15 needed along US 50, and recommended that the corridor be
16 reviewed under a Tier 1 Environmental Impact Study,
17 which started in 2006.

18 And a little bit of the schedule. So we had
19 a Notice of Intent in January of 2006, we had scoping
20 and public meetings starting in February of 2006, we had
21 an Alternate -- Alternatives Evaluation and
22 Environmental Analysis that started in 2010, and we just
23 published the Draft Tier 1 Environmental Impact Study in
24 June, and currently it's under the public comment
25 period; and the next steps after that will be to do a

1 combined Final Tier E -- 1 EIS and Record of Decision --
2 or a ROD -- which we hope to have done by mid- to end of
3 2017.

4 Next slide.

5 Since the corridor is 150 miles long funding
6 will not be available all at once to implement documents
7 for the entire corridor, so we looked at a Tiered NEPA
8 process which allows CDOT to keep Environmental Analysis
9 current as funding becomes available.

10 Study of the entire corridor at once gives
11 CDOT a better understanding of mitigation strategies,
12 and the ability to maximize financial investments and
13 mitigation efforts corridor-wide.

14 Using a Tiered NEPA process also allows the
15 Environmental Analysis to shape transportation planning
16 decisions, along with input from agencies, and you, the
17 local public.

18 Next slide.

19 As you know, US 50 is a coast-to-coast
20 highway. This corridor study specifically looks at US
21 50 from just east of I-25 all the way to the Kansas
22 border, or the proximity of the Kansas line. As you
23 know, it's a major local, regional, and national
24 corridor serving east/west travel through the Lower
25 Arkansas Valley, Southern Colorado, and beyond. The

1 corridor links two major north/south transpor --
2 transportation routes of I-25 and 287. This also -- US
3 50 also serves as the main street for nine communities
4 in Colorado east of Pueblo.

5 So zeroing in a little bit more on the -- the
6 project study area. You can kind of see the yellow
7 band, and that's the -- the study that we looked at, it
8 ranged from 1 to 4 miles wide. The -- specifically the
9 US 287/US 50 reliever route was separated out of this
10 because it had its own environmental study as you should
11 know. The reliever route study analyzed US 287 and 50
12 routes that go around the Lamar community. So that is
13 the east section that -- we didn't study the whole
14 section from Pueblo all the way to Kansas.

15 The purpose for the proposed improvements
16 along US 50 corridor is to improve safety and mobility
17 for all users.

18 Safety issues. Data compiled from 2008 to
19 2012 showed approximately 330 crashes annually from
20 Pueblo to Kansas line. The crash data observed showed
21 this corridor to be relatively higher compared to other
22 state averages of similar corridors. Several factors
23 are likely to contribute to this, including limited
24 passing opportunities, frequent changes in road design
25 and characteristics, and inadequate clear zones.

1 Next.

2 The purpose for the proposed improvements
3 along US 50 corridor is to improve safety/mobility for
4 all users. The inadequate mobility along the corridor
5 has been cited as a factor that limits ec -- economic --
6 that limits economic development. The mobility was
7 mostly caused by conflicting needs of local,
8 regional -- regional, and long-distance users, and also
9 numerous uncontrolled access points along Highway 50.

10 The project seeks to improve mobility for all
11 users balancing mobility and access needs, while
12 providing flexibility to meet future travel demands.

13 So -- al -- alternative screening. So we --
14 we did four steps to complete this -- the screening
15 process, which are outlined using four questions.

16 So in step one on our regional corridor
17 location we asked at a regional level where would
18 transportation improvements be needed. So we looked at
19 a north regional corridor, which varied from 1 to 10
20 miles north of the existing alignment; we looked at an
21 existing alignment, which basically followed on or near
22 the existing alignment; and we also looked at a south
23 option, which varied from 1 to 10 miles south of US 50.
24 So under that first step we analyzed the existing
25 corridor was selected based on the location, better

1 serving local and regional users of US 50.

2 The next step is -- we looked at is what
3 types of mode -- modes of transportation improvements
4 would meet the needs of the corridor. We looked at
5 rail, bus, carpooling/transportation system management,
6 and highway. The rail, bus, carpooling/transportation
7 system management failed to address the safety issues,
8 mobility for all users, and provide flexibility for
9 future traffic, the highway option was carried forward
10 because it fully addressed all of the needs.

11 The third step we -- and the question we
12 asked is what type of facility would meet the needs of
13 the corridor. We looked at two-lane with passing lanes,
14 which is a partial and total rebuild; we looked at a
15 four-lane highway, we looked at a four-lane rural
16 expressway, and also a four-lane freeway.

17 The facility types without median refuges, or
18 basically a median, are -- the two-lane options and
19 four-lane option would not improve the ability for local
20 users to cross and turn left onto the highway, so -- a
21 four-lane freeway would severely limit the number of
22 locations/crossings that the local access would have,
23 for these reasons a four-lane expressway was identified
24 as a preferred facility to carry forward.

25 The fourth and final question we talked

1 about -- or discussed was either through town or around
2 town, and what transportation improvements would be made
3 through the communities.

4 The through-town corridors were eliminated
5 from consideration because of the impact it would have
6 to local mobility, balance mobility for all users, and
7 flexibility to address future traffic needs; the
8 around-town corridors would better meet the project
9 purpose and need for -- and minimize community en masse.

10 So we also looked at what alternatives to be
11 evaluated. The Alternatives Analysis was conducted to
12 determine which of the alignments would have the least
13 environmental impact. In accordance with NEPA a
14 no-build alternative is included to provide a basis for
15 comparison with the build alternatives. For this
16 project a no-build alternative includes ongoing
17 maintenance of pavement and bridges on the existing US
18 50 alignment; it also would include planning minor
19 safety improvements, provisions for passing lane
20 sections, routine pavement overlays, repair of any
21 weather- or crash-related damage, and accommodates local
22 agency improvements to the US 50 corridor.

23 The section of the preferred around-town was
24 based on the Effects Analysis conducted on three
25 environmental corridor categories: rural and

1 agricultural, natural, community and built.
2 Consideration for the quantity and resource impacted,
3 along with the quality, allowed the study to determine
4 the significance of the impact. The result of the study
5 led to recommendations on corridor locations around each
6 community. We're going to look at that next.

7 In Pueblo County there were two sections we
8 looked at. There's a -- there were three alternatives
9 looked at around Pueblo, we had Pueblo north, Pueblo
10 existing alignment, and a Pueblo State Highway 47
11 connection. The existing section of US 50 in Pueblo is
12 already developed -- a developed transportation
13 corridor, while the other alternatives would fragment
14 agriculture and prairie habitat. Due to the
15 significantly less impacts the existing line would have
16 compared to the other build alternatives the existing
17 line is preferred along US 50 corridor.

18 So as you can see the green section is the
19 preferred and the two red are the eliminated
20 alternatives.

21 They're also indicated on this board, so
22 afterwards you're more than welcome to come and take a
23 closer look at them (indicating).

24 On the Pueblo to Fowler built alternatives we
25 looked at Fort Reynolds, which is along the existing

1 alignment, and, then, also the realignment, so -- Fort
2 Reynolds is also close to where the Boone turnoff is --
3 so I guess we included that. So we looked at -- both
4 alignments had similar impacts to rural and agricultural
5 environment, and the natural environment, the difference
6 to Alternative 2 would improve safety and minimize
7 potential impacts to the community and built
8 environment, leading this alternative to be identified
9 as the preferred alternative.

10 Next in Otero County we had the Fowler built,
11 and as you notice both of them are green. Alternative 1
12 would have -- so Alternative 1 is Fowler to the north,
13 Alternative 2 is Fowler to the south. Alternative 1, or
14 to the north, would have fewer impacts to the
15 agricultural, while Alternative 2 would have fewer
16 impacts on the natural environment, and each has
17 comparable effects on the community and built
18 environment. Since both have tradeoffs no preferred
19 alternative was identified in Fowler, and both were --
20 will be carried forward to the Tier 2 document.

21 Manzanola. Manzanola north is Alternative 1,
22 Alternative 2 is Manzanola south. Both alternatives
23 were fairly comparable, however, Alternative 1 would
24 result in fewer potential effects to agricultural pro --
25 productivity, and the community and built environment.

1 In Rocky Ford we also had a north and south
2 alignment. Alternative 1 was just to the north, would
3 have greater potential to minimize effects to the
4 historic resources, and received greater community
5 support during this screening process because it's not
6 as close to the town of Rocky Ford.

7 Swink is our other section that we didn't
8 provi -- select a preferred alternative. Both
9 alternatives were comparable in their ability to meet
10 the purpose and need of the project, and both had their
11 advantages to the town of Swink. No preferred route was
12 selected at this location, therefore, both of those
13 alternatives will be carried forward.

14 In La Junta we actually looked at four
15 alternatives, we had one to the north and three to the
16 south. Alternative 1, to the north, would result in the
17 most environmental-damaging route because it would
18 require construction through a major floodplain, it was
19 eliminated from consideration because the -- the three
20 other south alternatives generally lacked major adverse
21 impacts. Alternative 2 is preferred because it's the
22 shortest, closest to town, and meets the purpose and
23 need.

24 Next.

25 In Bent County we had two alternatives around

1 Las Animas, one -- I guess we're calling it to the north
2 and one to the south. The north alternative has major
3 access advantages that could alleviate potential social
4 and economic impacts of the bypass, combined with lesser
5 environmental impacts. Of the two alternatives
6 Alternative 1 was the preferred alternative.

7 In Prowers County, as mentioned before US
8 287/US 50 reliever route study was already conducted for
9 routes that go around the community.

10 In Granada we had two options, north and
11 south, we picked the south option. Alternative 2 was
12 identified as the preferred alternative because it has
13 a -- slightly fewer natural, and community and built
14 environmental impacts.

15 In Holly we had north -- Holly north and
16 Holly south. Alternative 2 was identified as the
17 preferred alternative because it has fewer environmental
18 impacts to the natural, and community and built
19 environments; also this improves the access from State
20 Highway 89 to US 50, and vice-versa.

21 And last, benefits of the improvements. The
22 project improvements will address the existing concerns
23 throughout the corridor as previously mentioned, and it
24 offers the following benefits: increased safety,
25 mobility, passing opportunities, improved shoulders that

1 will meet current standards, and fewer speed reductions
2 with faster travel times.

3 Rob is up next.

4 MR. ROB FREI: Thanks, Dan.

5 So I'm going to talk about the environmental
6 resources that we evaluated during this Tier 1 document.
7 As you can see on that slide there we covered kind of
8 four separate categories, agricultural, community and
9 built environment, natural environment, and then there's
10 other resources we looked at that didn't really fall
11 into either one of those categories, and we'll go over
12 that here in just a moment.

13 So this slide here shows kind of how we went
14 about evaluating our impacts to the varying resources.
15 So this graphic up here illustrates that we have a
16 1,000-foot wide alignment corridor, but when we actually
17 go to -- go forward with construction we're only going
18 to need about 250 feet of that.

19 So the way we assessed our impacts would
20 be -- if -- if this was Rocky Ford, for example, here,
21 we just calculated the acreage of -- of what was in that
22 1,000-foot corridor and, then, we took 25 percent of it
23 to make up for that 250-foot wide swath for actual
24 construction.

25 So when we move forward in the next slides

1 you'll see our impacts are pretty big, please keep in
2 mind that when we actually go to that Tier 2 level
3 document that we will be looking at avoiding those
4 resources if possible, minimizing our impacts, and,
5 then, mitigating for those impacts. So this is great
6 for -- gives you an idea of how we evaluated the
7 wetlands, agricultural resources, ranchlands, those
8 sorts of resources.

9 For resources such as history, archaeological
10 resources that fall within that 1,000-foot corridor
11 can't really divvy them up, give them a percentage, so
12 we included everything, so -- and we'll be talking about
13 that here in the next few slides.

14 So the first one is -- that -- that we looked
15 at is agricultural impacts and agricultural
16 infrastructure. So along the 150-mile corridor there
17 is(sic) four feedlots along US 50, six produce markets,
18 and then 24 irrigation canals and ditches. Again, when
19 we actually get into that Tier 2 level design and
20 evaluation we'll look at ways to avoid, minimize, and,
21 then, mitigate our impacts.

22 The next one there, on -- on farmlands you
23 can see there's a range of 2,866 to 3,047 acres. The
24 reason for that range is because we haven't fully
25 identified our preferred alternative at Swink and

1 Fowler, so that's why there's a range there.

2 And then the rangelands as well, it's
3 estimated to be between 1790 to 2380 acres of
4 potentially impacted ranchlands. Again, it's over on a
5 150-mile long corridor.

6 The natural environment. Wetland/riparian
7 potential impacts range from 587 to 713 acres. Most of
8 that is estimated to be riparian. We did not do a full
9 delineation for this level of document, that level of
10 detail will be done during the Tier 2 level review.

11 And then wildlife habitat ranges from 4,287
12 acres to 4,564 acres. So, again, that's not really new
13 acreage, that includes the -- the rangeland, which is
14 wildlife habitat, it includes the wetland/riparian
15 areas, and, then, it also includes the couple of state
16 wildlife areas that we could potentially impact along
17 the corridor.

18 Also along the corridor are five -- four
19 mining operations consisting of active sand and gravel
20 quarries, and, then, there are six geological formations
21 that have the potential to produce paleontological
22 resources. No known paleontological resources are known
23 to be impacted, but we won't know until we get into
24 final -- final design, then -- oftentimes you don't find
25 out you're impacting something until you actually get

1 into it, so -- but we've identified what those locations
2 are.

3 The next one is community and built
4 environment. So the first one there is -- is historic,
5 and you'll notice that it ranges from 60 to 79 historic
6 resources could potentially be impacted. So of these
7 resources we've got -- 24 of them are irrigation canals,
8 which we have just determined have the potential to be
9 historically eligible, so that's where a large
10 percentage of that number comes from; and, then, we also
11 had 14 to 17 bridges that would be replaced along the
12 corridor, along the 150 miles, those -- those have been
13 identified as being potentially eligible as well.

14 We also have a couple of long linear
15 resources, you have the Santa Fe Trail and the
16 Burlington Northern Santa Fe Railroad that parallels
17 much of US 50; and, then, the remaining historic
18 properties include some businesses, residences, and,
19 then, buildings associated with historic ranches.

20 Archaeological resources. There are nine
21 known archaeological sites identified along the
22 corridor, they're really -- they've been identified as
23 really occurring only between two -- two segments, one
24 is between Pueblo and Fowler, and the other is between
25 La Junta and Las Animas.

1 For land use there are 13 conservation
2 easements along that corridor and then there are 10
3 public properties as well, and the public properties
4 include a couple of state wildlife areas, the John
5 Martin Reservoir, the golf course in Fowler, a couple of
6 pedestrian trails in Holly and Granada; and, then,
7 dir -- indirect impacts to the Comanche National
8 Grasslands, the Boggsville National Historic Site, and
9 Bent's Fort as well, and those direct impacts would
10 primarily be related to potential changes in access.

11 And then for park lands and recreational a
12 lot of the same resources would be impacted, again John
13 Martin Reservoir, the golf course in Fowler, a couple of
14 state wildlife areas, the trails in Granada and Holly;
15 and, then, also there are four birding trails that have
16 been identified along US 50 as well.

17 Other resources that we looked at were
18 transportation, hazardous materials, and Section 4(f).

19 So transportation, and the whole purpose of
20 why we're doing this, is to increase mobility and safety
21 so that when we go into construction that's the -- the
22 benefit of -- of this project.

23 Hazardous materials, you see there are -- 162
24 hazardous material sites have been identified along that
25 corridor. To give you an idea of what hazardous sites

1 may contain it could be a Wal-Mart that actually has
2 household chemicals that you purchase, it could be the
3 farmer co-op, fertilizers, anything that stores
4 hazardous materials. So it -- it's -- it's a broad
5 range of -- fueling stations is common along the
6 corridor as well.

7 Section 4(f) is a transportation-specific law
8 that provides additional protection for public parks and
9 recreation areas, it also provides additional protection
10 to historic resources and -- and archaeological
11 resources. So that -- that's what Section 4(f) is.

12 So other resources we looked at with
13 minimal -- minimal impact include environmental justice,
14 water quality, climate change, aesthetics, visual, air
15 quality, traffic noise, and energy.

16 Social and economic conditions are kind of
17 hard to assess at the Tier 1 level 'cause we don't have
18 a lot of design at this point, and we also have
19 different community make-ups along the corridor, so
20 we'll be taking a -- a bigger look at social and
21 economic impacts when we get into the Tier 2 level
22 documents.

23 So the next steps. So comments received
24 tonight and throughout the rest of the comment period
25 will be responded to and addressed in the Tier 1 Final

1 EIS and Record of Decision, so public comment period
2 extends through till July 29th.

3 When we get the Final EIS and ROD done we
4 will go into the Tier 2 NEPA documents, so those could
5 range from categorical exclusion, which are more simpler
6 projects, those might be more appropriate before the
7 improvements between towns in EA or a potential EIS,
8 when we start getting into more level of detail in
9 design it could be more appropriate for the routes
10 around towns; and, then, once those projects get wrapped
11 up we'll actually go into construction.

12 So comments tonight. You can -- after this
13 presentation we'll take a 5, 10-minute break, let you
14 guys -- whoever wants to give a public comment in the
15 hearing format will be able to do that. If you want to
16 speak your -- your comments privately, the court
17 reporter will be available afterwards and you can do a
18 one-on-one with her as well (indicating).

19 You can also submit written comments tonight.
20 There's forms over here, and, then, you can submit those
21 into the comment box, or you can e-mail or mail those
22 before July 29th as well (indicating). More information
23 on that I think is in a couple of slides from here.

24 So for those that want to provide verbal
25 comments in the hearing format the way it will work is

1 we'll ask you to sign up over where you came in at the
2 entrance, after that 5 to 10 minutes I will call you up
3 individually, and, then, we'll ask you to clearly state
4 your name, where you're from, and then please give your
5 comment.

6 There will be a three-minute time limit to
7 provide your comment, deferring time to another is -- is
8 not allowed; and please, of course, be respectful with
9 your comments.

10 And then when you make your comment those
11 will actually get formally addressed in the Tier 1 Final
12 EIS and Record of Decision.

13 And, again, here's a couple of ways you can
14 get more information either on the document, you go to
15 the project website; you can also e-mail your comments
16 to the Atkins e-mail there, or you can mail it to the
17 Atkins address there (indicating).

18 So that will conclude this portion of it,
19 we'll find out who wants to give a public hearing
20 comment, here in about 5, 10 minutes we'll get started
21 on that, and -- and, then, after that's over we will
22 continue to be here, both CDOT staff and consultant
23 staff, to address any additional questions you may have.
24 Thank you.

25 (A break was taken.)

1 MR. ROB FREI: Excuse me real quick. So
2 nobody's signed up to give a public hearing comment,
3 just want to make sure that's correct before we close
4 this portion of the hearing. Anybody want to speak in
5 front of everyone?

6 (No response.)

7 MR. ROB FREI: No? Okay. Thank you.

8 (The proceedings were concluded at the hour
9 of 6:10 p.m.)

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TIER 1 DRAFT ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACT STATEMENT

PUBLIC HEARING

July 12, 2016

6:30 p.m.

The Gobin Building
105 North Main Street
Rocky Ford, Colorado 81067

1 MR. DAN DAHLKE: My name's Dan Dahlke, I'm a
2 resident Engineer with the Colorado Department of
3 Transportation out of Pueblo, and I'm going to give a
4 brief presentation.

5 I'll let Rob introduce himself (indicating).

6 MR. ROB FREI: Hello. Thank you for coming.
7 My name is Rob Frei, I'm the Region Environmental and
8 Planning Manager, so we -- Region 2, and that's
9 Southeastern Colorado.

10 MR. DAN DAHLKE: All right. So you see the
11 boards in the back, we're going to give a brief
12 presentation, after the presentation there will be a
13 public comment period, Rob is going to go over that a
14 little bit more, but after you are more than welcome to
15 come back to the boards, we'll have lots of staff back
16 there to answer your questions if you have more
17 questions (indicating).

18 If you want to provide a comment there will
19 be some ways to do it. There's a comment form in the
20 back, in the back kitchen, you're more than welcome to
21 write out a comment there as well (indicating).

22 Like I said, we'll have a public comment
23 period, so we'll give you some time to give a public
24 comment that will be recorded by our court reporter.
25 Also, if you don't want to give a public comment in

1 front of everyone there will be some one-on-one time
2 available afterwards.

3 All right, next slide.

4 So a little bit of history. The Corridor
5 Selection Study was the beginning stages for developing
6 a corridor-wide vision for the future of the highway to
7 improve safety and mobility in the Lower Arkansas
8 Valley. The study concluded that the transportation
9 improvements are needed along U.S. 50, recommend that
10 the corridor be environmentally reviewed under a Tier 1
11 level Environmental Impact Assessment. The Tier 1
12 Assessment began in 2006.

13 Schedule. The Notice of Intent for the
14 pro -- project was published in January of 2006, we did
15 scoping and public meetings starting in February of
16 2006, and an Alternatives Evaluation was conducted and
17 documented in the Tier 1 Draft EIS, which was released
18 in June of 2016.

19 The public will review and comment on the
20 document for a 30-day period beginning in June, which
21 ends July 29th.

22 The decision in the combined Tier 1 Final
23 E -- EIS and Record of Decision, once approved by the
24 Federal Highway Administration, will complete the Tier 1
25 EIS. As funding becomes available for projects within

1 the corridor the Tier 2 NEPA documents will be prepared.

2 Why did we do a Tiered EIS process. Since
3 the corridor is over -- or approximately 150 miles long
4 funding will not be available all at once to implement
5 all of the improvements needed along the corridor, the
6 Tiered NEPA process allows CDOT to keep Environmental
7 Analysis current as funding becomes available. Studying
8 the entire corridor at once gives CDOT a better
9 understanding of mitigation strategies, and the ability
10 to max -- maximize financial investment for mitigation
11 efforts corridor-wide.

12 Using the Tiered NEPA process Environment --
13 or allows Environmental Analysis to shape the
14 transportation planning decisions, along with input from
15 agencies and the local public.

16 A little bit more about the corridor. The
17 corridor that this studies is from east of Pueblo to
18 approximately the Kansas state line, which is, like I
19 said before, 150 miles long. It's a major local,
20 regional, national corridor serving east/west travel
21 through the Lower Arkansas Valley, Southern Colorado,
22 and beyond. The corridor links two major north/south
23 transportation routes of I-25 and 287, and also
24 currently serves as main street for nine communities.

25 The Tier 1 NEPA study used a study area

1 approximately 1 to 4 miles wide for the entire 150-mile
2 Pueblo to Kansas state line. The 287/US 50 reliever
3 route was studied separately as the US 287 Lamar
4 Reliever Route Environmental Assessment, so that section
5 around Lamar, when you look at the maps, was excluded.

6 Next.

7 Purpose for the project. The purpose for the
8 proposed improvements along US 50 corridor is to improve
9 safety and mobility for all users. Data compiled from
10 2008 to 2012 showed approximately 330 crashes annually
11 from Pueblo to the Kansas state line. This crash data
12 observed showed relatively higher compared to other
13 corridors of similar size. Several factors are likely
14 to contribute to this, including limited passing
15 opportunities, frequent changes in road design
16 characteristics, and inadequate clear zones.

17 The project need. The pur -- the purpose for
18 the proposed improvements along US 50 corridor is to
19 improve safety and mobility for all users. Inadequate
20 mobility along the corridor has been cited as a factor
21 that limits economic development. Inadequate mobility
22 is likely caused by conflicting needs of local,
23 regional, and long-distance users, and numerous
24 uncontrolled access points. This project seeks to
25 improve mobility for all users by balancing mobility,

1 access needs, all while providing the flexibility to
2 meet future travel demands.

3 The alternative development process involved
4 using transportation engineering and environmental
5 criteria to develop potential transportation solutions.
6 Each of the criteria was directly related to the purpose
7 and need of the project.

8 The screening process followed four steps
9 which are out -- outlined through the following
10 questions. The first one was at a regional level where
11 would transportation improvements be made. We looked at
12 a north corridor, which was 1 to 10 miles north of the
13 existing alignment, we looked at the existing alignment,
14 and we also looked at a southern(sic) -- southern
15 option, which was 1 to 10 miles south of the existing
16 alignment. The existing corridor was selected based on
17 location better serving local and regional users of US
18 50.

19 The next question we asked is what types and
20 modes of transportation improvement needs -- would meet
21 the needs of the corridor, so we looked at rail
22 improvements, bus improvements,
23 carpooling/transportation systems, and also the highway.
24 Rail, bus, carpooling and transportation safety
25 management strategies failed to address safety issues,

1 mobility for any user, and provide flexibility for
2 future traffic needs, the highway option was carried
3 forward because it fully addressed all the needs.

4 The third step was facility type, what type
5 of facility would meet the needs of the corridor. We
6 looked at a two-lane highway with passing lanes, both
7 partial and total rebuild; four-laning the highway, a
8 four-lane rural expressway, and a four-lane freeway.

9 Facility types without med -- median
10 refuge -- refuges. Two-lane options and four-lane
11 highway option -- the first two -- would not improve the
12 ability for local users to cross or turn left onto the
13 highway, a four-lane freeway would severely limit the
14 number of location crossings or local access, for these
15 reasons the four-lane expressway was identified as a
16 preferred facility type to be carried forward.

17 The fourth step we took was what
18 transportation improvements would be made through
19 communities along the corridor or around them. The
20 through-town corridors were eliminated from
21 consideration because of the impact it would have to the
22 local mobility, balance mobility for all users, and
23 flexibility to address future traffic needs; the
24 around-town corridors would better meet the project
25 needs with purpose and need, and minimize community

1 impacts.

2 So eval -- the alternatives we evaluated. In
3 accordance with NEPA a no-build alternative is included
4 to provide a basis for comparison with the build
5 alternatives. For this project the no-build alternative
6 includes ongoing maintenance of pavement and bridges on
7 the existing US 50 alignment; it also includes planning
8 minor safety improvements, provision of passing lanes,
9 routine pavement overlays, repair of any weather- or
10 crash-related damages, and also accommodates local
11 agency improvements to the corridor.

12 Se -- selection of the preferred around-town
13 route was based on the Effect Analysis conducted for the
14 three environmental cor -- categories listed, rural and
15 agricultural, natural, and then community and built.
16 Consideration for the quantity of the resource impacted,
17 along with the quality, allowed the study to determine
18 the significance of the impact. The results of the
19 study led to recommendations on corridor locations
20 around each community.

21 We're going to look at Pueblo County first.
22 So in Pueblo County we had three alternatives, we had a
23 north, what we call the "North Airport," the existing
24 alignment, and the State Highway 47 connector. The
25 existing section of US 50 is already a developed

1 transportation corridor, while the other al --
2 alternatives would fragment agricultural and prairie
3 habitat. Due to the significantly less impacts the
4 existing alignment would have compared to the other
5 build alternatives the existing alignment is the
6 preferred along the US 50 section. So when you look at
7 this you'll see the two red were eliminated and the
8 green line is our preferred, and in the background --
9 you can't quite see it -- but it's -- yellow is the
10 existing alignment (indicating).

11 For Fort Reynolds, or -- which is also the
12 Boone turnoff -- we had two alignments, which was the
13 existing alignment, and, then -- which we call the "Fort
14 Lyons"(sic) alignment was our other alternative. Both
15 alignments have similar impacts to rural and
16 agricultural environment, and the natural environment,
17 the difference between Alternative 2 would improve
18 safety and minimize potential impacts to the community
19 and built environment leading to this alternative to be
20 the preferred alternative.

21 In Otero County we had a Fowler north and a
22 Fowler south. As you notice, there is -- sorry.
23 Alternative 1 would have fewer impacts on agricultural,
24 while Alternative 2 would have fewer impacts to the
25 natural environment, and each has comparable effects on

1 the community and built environments. Since both have
2 tradeoffs no preferred alternative has been identified
3 in Fowler, or both will be carried forward to a Tier 2
4 analysis.

5 At Manzanola we had a Manzanola north and a
6 Manzanola south, both alternatives were fairly
7 comparable, however, Alternative 1, which is to the
8 north, would result in fewer potential effects to
9 agricultural pro -- productivity, and the community and
10 built environment.

11 The Rocky Ford alternative, we also had a
12 Rocky Ford north and a Rocky Ford south. So the Rocky
13 Ford north has greater potential to minimize effects to
14 historic resources, and received greater community
15 support during the screening process because the route
16 is closer to the town of Rocky Ford.

17 In Swink we had two alternatives as well,
18 both alternatives were comparable in their ability to
19 meet the purpose and need of the project, and both had
20 their advantages to the town of Swink. No preferred
21 alternative was selected at this location, therefore,
22 both alternatives will be carried forward to the Tier 2
23 analysis.

24 In La Junta we actually had four
25 alternatives, we had La Junta north and, then, we had

1 three to the south, and each one just got further and
2 further away around the -- the town. La Junta north
3 would result in the most environmentally-damaging route
4 because it required construction through a major
5 floodplain, it was eliminated from consideration because
6 the three other south alternatives generally lack major
7 adverse impacts. Alternative 2 is preferred because
8 it's the shortest, closest to town, and better meets the
9 purpose and need of the project.

10 In Bent County we had Las Animas north and
11 Las Animas south. Las Animas north has major access
12 advantages that could alleviate potential social
13 economic effects by the bypass. Combined with the
14 lesser environmental impacts in the two alternatives,
15 Alternative 1 is the preferred alternative.

16 In Prowers County, as mentioned before the US
17 287/US 50 reliever route study was already conducted for
18 the routes that go through the community, however, we
19 did have two build alternatives in Granada, a Granada
20 north and south. Alternative 2, or to the south, was
21 identified as a preferred alternative because it has
22 slightly fewer natural, and community and built impacts.

23 In Holly we had a north and a south as well.
24 We selected the south on that one because it was
25 identified -- it had fewer environmental impacts to the

1 natural, and community and built environments; it also
2 connect -- connects State Highway 89 to US 50, and vice
3 versa, better.

4 So benefits of the improvements. We're going
5 to have increased safety, increased mobility, in --
6 increased passing opportunities with two lanes in each
7 direction, improved shoulders that will meet current
8 FHWA standards, and fewer speed reduction zones, and
9 faster travel times.

10 Rob is going to take over.

11 MR. ROB FREI: Thanks, Dan.

12 So here in -- in front of me you have the
13 four different categories of environmental resources
14 that we looked at during this Tier 1 level document
15 review. So the first one up there is -- is agriculture,
16 and we've got community and built environment, natural
17 environment, and then other for resources that didn't
18 fit well into those other categories, and I'll go
19 through at a higher level each -- each one of those.

20 But before I do that to give you kind -- a
21 little bit of background on how we assess, at least at
22 this Tier 1 level, the potential environmental impact.
23 The alignment that we've chosen is a 1,000-foot wide
24 corridor, what we really need for the full build-out is
25 250 feet, so we would put that -- during Tier 2 level

1 design we would con -- design it within that 1,000-foot
2 corridor.

3 So you can see in this graphic up here, if
4 this was farmland or a wetland, the way we determine the
5 potential amount of impacts was to just simply
6 identify -- we'll say, for example, this is wetlands, we
7 just identified the amount of wetlands within the
8 corridor and then just multiplied it by .25 percent to
9 get to that 250-foot width (indicating). So that works
10 well for -- for rangelands, agriculture, and -- and
11 wetlands, and other resources.

12 For historical resources, if it was within
13 that 1,000-foot corridor or even adjacent -- we'll talk
14 about that here in a minute -- we -- we just included
15 it. So when we actually get into that Tier 2 level
16 review we will look at avoiding, first, impacts to all
17 these resources, if we can't do that we'll -- we'll
18 minimize it, and then we'll look at mitigation for it,
19 so please keep that in mind when we move forward.

20 So the first one we'll talk about is
21 agricultural impact. So along the 150-mile long
22 corridor there's four feedlots, six produce markets, and
23 then there's 24 irrigation canals and ditches along the
24 corridor.

25 For farmlands -- this is a -- an estimate --

1 so it's between 2,866 to 3,047 acres -- again, that's
2 over a 150-mile long corridor -- and we would try to
3 avoid as much as possible. The reason there's actually
4 a range is because we did not determine the north or
5 south alignments at Swink and Fowler, so that's why
6 there's a range at -- at those locations.

7 Range -- rangelands, 1790 to 2380 acres could
8 potentially be impacted along this corridor as well.

9 Natural environment, 587 to 713 acres of
10 potential wetland and riparian habitat could be
11 impacted. Most of that is actually riparian habitat.
12 We did not at this level do a full wetland delineation
13 or even wildlife habitat review at a, you know, detailed
14 level, that will be done at Tier 2. And, again, we
15 would try to avoid as much as -- as possible within that
16 1,000-foot corridor where we can.

17 Wildlife habitat, it's kind of double
18 counting some of the other impacts we've had already, so
19 it includes rangelands, it includes wetlands, and also
20 includes a few state wildlife areas along the corridor
21 that we could potentially impact as well.

22 Geological and paleontological resources.
23 There are four mining operations along the corridor
24 consisting of sand and gravel quarries, there are six
25 known geological formations along the 150-mile section.

1 No known paleontological sources would be impacted,
2 however, with paleontological resources you really don't
3 know until you start digging, so we've identified where
4 the high potential to run into potential paleontological
5 resources are.

6 Historic resources. So we have 60 to 79
7 potential historic properties along the corridor, so
8 these consist of between 23 to 27 -- I want to make sure
9 I have the number right here, hold on.

10 (Reviewed document.)

11 Actually we have 24 irrigation canals along
12 the corridor and we just have identified those as being
13 potentially eligible, so that -- that's a big chunk of
14 it; and then we have 14 to 17 bridges along the corridor
15 that would need replacement as well. Fourteen to 17 of
16 those are potentially eligible structures as well.

17 Then we have a couple other linear resources,
18 we have the Santa Fe Trail and we also have the BNSF
19 Railroad that are both eligible, or are listed
20 resources; and then the remaining is a mix of
21 businesses, primary residences, and buildings associated
22 with potentially eligible ranches.

23 There are nine archaeological sites along the
24 corridor, those sites are located between two sections.
25 So the section between Pueblo and Fowler is -- is one

1 area where there's a concentration of archaeological
2 sites, the other is between La Junta and Las Animas.

3 And, then, moving down we -- for land use
4 there are 13 conservation easements along the corridor,
5 and then there are 10 public properties that could
6 potentially be impacted, so these include several state
7 wildlife areas along the corridor, the John Martin
8 Reservoir, the Fowler golf course, a couple pedestrian
9 trails in Holly and Granada; and, then, it also includes
10 some indirect impacts to other resources, including the
11 Comanche National Grasslands, the Boggsville Historic
12 Site, and, then, Old Bent's Fort. Those indirect
13 impacts could be changes to -- to access getting to
14 those areas.

15 And then park lands and recreational, there
16 are 15 parks and recreational resources along the
17 corridor. Again, many of those are the same, again John
18 Martin Reservoir, several state wildlife areas, the two
19 trails that I mentioned in Holly and Granada, the golf
20 course in Fowler; and then there's four birding trails
21 that use US 50 that have been identified by Colorado
22 Division of Wildlife.

23 Other impacts along the corridor. We did
24 look at transportation, it's our whole purpose and need,
25 so we'd have a positive impact on -- on transportation,

1 we'd increase mobility and safety, which Dan talked
2 about.

3 Hazardous materials along the corridor.
4 We've identified 162 hazardous material sites. So that
5 sounds high, but keep in mind it's any facility that
6 harbors, or sells, or maintains hazardous materials, so
7 that could be your Wal-Mart, it's your fueling stations,
8 it's your farmer co-ops, places like that along the
9 corridor. So that will be updated as we move forward,
10 too.

11 And then Section 4(f) is a
12 transportation-related law, it provides additional
13 protection to public parks and recreational areas,
14 historic and archaeological resource sites, so it's --
15 it's a redundant, but it's a separate resource that we
16 looked at during the NEPA review.

17 So other resources along the corridor in --
18 that have minimal impacts is environmental justice,
19 water quality, climate change, aesthetics, air quality,
20 traffic noise, and energy.

21 Social and economic conditions. We'll
22 actually do a further review during the 2 Tier analysis,
23 it's difficult to do it at this level of review because
24 we don't actually have design at -- at the Tier 1 level,
25 so that will -- further review on social and economic

1 conditions will be done at the 2 Tier level, so . . .

2 So that's a high level overview of the
3 environmental resources we looked at.

4 So, again, we'll go over the next step. So
5 comments received tonight throughout the review period
6 will be con -- considered and responded to in the Tier 1
7 Final EIS/Record of Decision, we expect that here --
8 like Dan pointed out -- next year, about mid-2017.

9 After we get the FEIS/ROD completed we'll
10 start looking at projects as they become avail -- as
11 funding becomes available to go into the Tier 2 NEPA
12 process and actually get in -- into the de -- design.
13 Some of those Tier 2 level documents could be
14 categorical exclusions, so those would be your smaller
15 projects, maybe passing lanes, to get toward that final
16 design -- or to that final product, or it could be an EA
17 or potentially an EIS for any around-town routes; and,
18 then, once that review is completed we'll actually go
19 into a full project design and construction after the
20 NEPA Tier 2 is -- is completed.

21 So comments tonight. Dan went over this,
22 we'll go over it again. After I'm done with this
23 presentation we'll give about a 5-, 10-minute break -- I
24 know there's a list of folks that have already signed up
25 to give a public hearing statement or comment, so we'll

1 have a 5, 10-minute break, make sure everyone that
2 signed up signed up and, then, we'll call you up.

3 Did you just skip one?

4 MR. LUKAS SCHROEDER: No.

5 MR. ROB FREI: No? Okay.

6 Oh, yeah. You can also speak your comments
7 privately to the court reporter here if you don't want
8 to do it in a public format (indicating).

9 You can also submit your written comments
10 tonight. When you came in, on the back table there's a
11 comment box there with comment forms, if you need
12 additional time, or you have additional comments after
13 tonight those can be mailed or e-mailed, and we'll give
14 information here in just a moment -- moment.

15 So the public comment period ends on July 29,
16 so please get your comments in before two weeks from
17 this Friday.

18 And quickly going over verbal comments
19 tonight. So those that actually want to stand up here
20 and give a formal public hearing comment I will go
21 through that list, I will call you up individually,
22 please wait to be recognized. When you do come up we
23 ask that you clearly state your full name and -- and
24 where you're from.

25 There's a three-minute limit for -- for the

1 verbal comments, deferring verbal comment time is not
2 going to be allowed; and, of course, please be
3 respectful with your -- with your comments.

4 Here's additional information, there's more
5 information on our project website down there
6 (indicating).

7 You can also e-mail your comments at the
8 atkinsglobal.com web address -- or e-mail address, and
9 then there's also an address to mail your comments to
10 (indicating).

11 So that concludes our -- our presentation,
12 we're going to give it 5, 10 minutes, if you want to
13 sign up to give an actual public hearing statement
14 comment we'll -- we'll do that in just a moment. Thank
15 you.

16 UNIDENTIFIED MALE SPEAKER: Can we ask a
17 question?

18 UNIDENTIFIED MALE SPEAKER: Can we ask a
19 ques -- question as far as the technical on the -- on
20 the EIS? I --

21 MR. ROB FREI: So -- real quick -- so the --
22 the format tonight is if you have a public statement
23 comment that will get addressed in the Final EIS and ROD
24 in about a year from now, please come up here and make
25 that statement in front of the microphone in about 5 to

1 10 minutes; if you have additional questions there will
2 be folks milling around that you can ask additional
3 questions to (indicating).

4 So thank you.

5 (A break was taken.)

6 MR. ROB FREI: Hey, folks, we're going to
7 start the public hearing portion. Folks, we're going to
8 start the public hearing portion of -- of this hearing,
9 the public comment, so if you guys --

10 MR. CHRIS TOMKY: (Slapped chair.)

11 MR. ROB FREI: Thank you. We'll try that one
12 more time.

13 If everyone could either take a seat or keep
14 conversations low we're going to have folks that have
15 signed up give a three-minute verbal comment, and we'll
16 do that here in just a minute. So we're going to put up
17 here on the screen to help you with your time kind of a
18 countdown so you'll know where you're at in the comment
19 process (indicating).

20 So, again, if you're not up here making a
21 verbal comment, there's a comment that you want actually
22 addressed in the Tier 1 EIS document, there are other
23 ways to do it, just make sure you either submit a
24 comment in one of the forms that -- that we talked about
25 earlier tonight.

1 So we'll -- we'll just start into this.

2 Miss Kathy Davis. Thank you.

3 MS. KATHY DAVIS: Hi, I'm Kathy Davis from La
4 Junta, and the only comments that I have are going to be
5 brief.

6 So from 2006 -- at that time there has been
7 40 years studying on this, and, then, environmental
8 study came in 10 years from that the last time that we
9 did that, so the problem is -- that I have, you're not
10 addressing -- the main problem area that I see on this
11 that needs to be addressed pretty quickly is the area
12 from Fowler to Pueblo where there's a lot of accidents
13 happening in that stretch, because it is two lane the
14 truckers are having a hard time, you know, with the
15 people passing them and that's when the crashes are
16 occurring. So that's one of the main problems that I --
17 I see coming up, okay? That's it.

18 (Applause.)

19 MR. ROB FREI: Thank you.

20 Priscilla Aragon. Miss Aragon here?

21 (No response.)

22 MR. ROB FREI: Okay. Mike Franklin.

23 MR. MIKE FRANKLIN: Yeah, my name is Mike
24 Franklin, I live in La Junta. I have a business that
25 is -- would be taken over by this thing right on the

1 highway, I've got three homes that will be taken over by
2 this deal on the highway right through my property, the
3 exits have been put in years ago, and quite a bit of
4 pastureland for my cows (indicating).

5 My business, I depend on everybody from the
6 road to get my business from, but if they're coming to
7 get bait from me at my bait shop, Hook, Line & Sinkers,
8 they come to me whether they go through La Junta or
9 whether they'll go around.

10 If they want to come see Comanche Grasslands,
11 they'll pull into La Junta, they'll go.

12 I'm all for selling my property for this deal
13 because I've seen lots of places in Texas that do
14 bypasses, it brings people, it brings jobs, it brings
15 lots of things, and my stuff will be for sale to them if
16 they want it.

17 (Applause.)

18 MR. ROB FREI: Miss Norma Carne(sic).

19 MS. NORMA CANNON: Cannon.

20 MR. ROB FREI: Cannon. I'm sorry. Thank
21 you.

22 MS. NORMA CANNON: I'm Norma Cannon, and I
23 live in La Junta. This supposedly newest alternative to
24 bypassing La Junta would go right through my property.
25 Like Mr. Franklin I have lots of property right along

1 that right-of-way, but I do not want a highway through
2 that property.

3 Now, 50 years ago when they started this
4 project I built a home out there at about the same time,
5 then there was my house and two other houses between me
6 and Higbee, and maybe two or three between me and the
7 City of La Junta, since that time we have acquired
8 numerous neighbors, including a rather large actually
9 development, so I don't see these things taken into
10 consideration on any of these maps.

11 And since they saw fit to list Highway 109,
12 which has been moved sin -- from my house since probably
13 15 years ago to another location, I would like to see
14 more specific maps and recommendations before we would
15 proceed with such a project.

16 (Applause.)

17 MR. ROB FREI: Mr. Chuck Hanagan.

18 MR. CHUCK HANAGAN: I'm Chuck Hanagan, and
19 I'm here today as a -- as a resident of the Town of
20 Swink. My family's been involved in agriculture for
21 well over a hundred years, I guess we've been involved
22 in this project since four or five years ago when you
23 guys started.

24 I'm not here today to speak out against
25 improvements, I think we all agree that safety and

1 mobility is a -- is a major concern, what I am against
2 is I disagree with the limits of -- that this project is
3 needed because we limit -- we currently limit economic
4 development. We have economic development here, we have
5 agriculture here, our number one concern in this area is
6 agriculture. Producers in this area fight day to day on
7 daily attacks to the agriculture in our area, whether it
8 be our water, our land, water to the -- to the Front
9 Range, water to Kansas, it's hard to farm in this area
10 (indicating).

11 A lot of the problems with -- with this
12 document that they've come out with -- and I don't have
13 enough ink to print it and I don't have enough paper to
14 print it, but fortunately they got a copy back there --
15 if you'll take a look at it they talk about footprints,
16 they're talking about the economic impact of what's
17 under the pavement, they're not talking about the
18 economic impact of when they put a -- put a farm -- or a
19 road across somebody's farm, it impacts the other side
20 of the highway, you can't get to that farm (indicating).

21 They're putting -- these are green lines now,
22 four years ago it was yellow lines, they put that over
23 the top of you it never goes away, that -- that Highway
24 50 probability someday is on -- is on top of your ground
25 so you have to deal with that, that adversely affects

1 the proper -- your value of your property, it has to.
2 Anybody that says it doesn't is an idiot.

3 I guess -- they talk about the economic
4 input(sic) -- impacts, they're talking about the loss of
5 productivity, they -- what they're using for figures
6 in -- in economic loss is the dollars of a ton of
7 alfalfa. I spend a hell of a lot of money -- all of
8 these farmers spend a hell of a lot of money raising
9 these crops. That money is spent down at the tire shop,
10 at the auto parts shop, buying a new pickup, across the
11 street at Benito's, wherever, that money is spent in our
12 economy, and it's rolled -- county commissioners, I've
13 talked to them -- somewhere between five and seven times
14 that rolls.

15 They're only taking what's -- what's right
16 underneath the pavement. There's going to be huge
17 economic, significant impacts to our community with --
18 if this goes through.

19 The other thing is this is just a general and
20 potential document, if -- if -- you know, general and
21 potential, it's been around for 50 years, damn well
22 before that I've seen it, they're going through with
23 this, at some point in time we've got to knock out the
24 ridiculous of a freeway or expressway.

25 We do need improvements, we need to look at

1 what's reasonable and -- and -- and justifiable. We
2 need to add some practicality back into this project and
3 not raise fear.

4 I know that there's a lot of money being put
5 into these project -- or into these studies and things,
6 and these guys have jobs to do, but let's -- let's be
7 practical about this, so . . .

8 Thank you.

9 (Applause.)

10 MR. ROB FREI: Mr. Tom Tomky.

11 MR. TOM TOMKY: Yes. My name's Tom Tomky,
12 I'm -- live on a farm south of Rocky Ford here
13 (indicating). I'm a community banker and a farmer, I
14 deal with businesses up and down this whole corridor on
15 a very frequent basis, all you have to do is -- is look
16 at where the interstate highways went across rural
17 America, look at the dying towns that they created
18 (indicating). I do not want to see that happen to our
19 beautiful Arkansas Valley.

20 They're talking about a -- a multi-decade
21 project, you know, I'm not going to be around to see it,
22 but I got a son right there that's a third generation
23 farmer; I got grandkids right there, I hope they're
24 going to be fourth generation farmer; and their kids are
25 going to be farmers, and I hope it's going to be right

1 here, but if our towns die they don't have a future
2 (indicating).

3 And I -- I don't know where -- where this
4 thing come(sic) from. I remember, like Norma Cannon,
5 four years ago all the people in Southeastern Colorado
6 asked for was a four-lane highway, we don't want you
7 moving them out of our town (indicating).

8 You can go from Pueblo four lanes, you go
9 down in the Valley, yeah, Fowler's two lanes going
10 through town, Manzanola's four lanes, it's four lanes
11 all the way from Manzanola through Rocky Ford, La Junta,
12 you know, outside of La Junta it -- it ends, it picks up
13 again four lanes through Las Animas, out towards Hasty
14 it's four lanes, picks up again at Wiley, it's four
15 lanes through -- through Lamar (indicating).

16 We don't need a mega, mega project funded by
17 the taxpayers, and I don't know if this will ever
18 happen, but I'm strongly against it.

19 And I think this format that you -- you got
20 right now doesn't work (indicating). People want to be
21 able to ans -- ask questions and hear the answers. If I
22 go back there and talk to somebody and ask one question,
23 somebody else has got questions, I don't know what their
24 questions are, I -- I don't learn anything by -- by not
25 having a question and answer before, so I'm strongly

1 against this. Thank you.

2 (Applause.)

3 MR. ROB FREI: All right, next is J.M.

4 Geringer(sic) -- Geringer.

5 (No response.)

6 MR. ROB FREI: From Rocky Ford.

7 G-e-r-i-n-g-e-r.

8 (No response.)

9 MR. ROB FREI: Okay. Carol -- I can't read
10 the last name, I apologize -- from La Junta. Is there a
11 Carol from La Junta?

12 MS. CAROLYN EHRLICH: Is it Carol or Carolyn?

13 MR. ROB FREI: It could -- Carolyn, yes.

14 MS. CAROLYN EHRLICH: Carolyn Ehrlich from La
15 Junta, Colorado. I'm retired. I just have -- my
16 question is, is this going to be a true interstate or is
17 it going to be a roa -- road like 287 that goes from
18 Amarillo to Wichita Falls? That's . . .

19 (Applause.)

20 MR. ROB FREI: Miss Rebecca Goodwin.

21 MS. REBECCA GOODWIN: I am going to speak
22 primarily from a more technical standpoint, but first
23 I'd like to say -- I'd like to request that the review
24 and comment period for this DEIS be extended. This is a
25 massive document, we have had very little time to truly

1 review it, and as somebody that has reviewed every one
2 of the EISes having to do with Pinon Canyon, it takes
3 time, so I would like to request that be considered,
4 'cause this is not a reasonable review and comment
5 period.

6 Second I would like to say that there was a
7 Programmatic Agreement -- this has to do with the
8 historic cultural resources -- that we developed for
9 this initial part of the Tier 1 and Tier 2, I'd like to
10 request two things, a copy of the historic context that
11 was to be developed under that, and also a copy of the
12 draft of Relative Effects Report that is specified
13 within that Programmatic Agreement, so that those can be
14 reviewed in conjunction with this Draft -- Draft EIS.

15 Now, I understand that this Tier 1 is a broad
16 overview, but you have looked at the very -- very
17 different aspects -- the environmental, the water, the
18 air, the cultural -- and you have segmented those to the
19 standpoint they're standing in little silos
20 (indicating). For an EIS that cannot be done, you have
21 to look at that greater intermingling of those impacts,
22 and, so, that certainly can be done in this -- in this
23 Tier 1, but it definitely must be done in that Tier 2 so
24 that they're not segmenting those issues. Having been
25 through the experience of that again with the Pinon

1 Canyon, an EIS was drawn up by the federal court because
2 of that, so you need to look at that.

3 Secondly, as far as -- especially having to
4 do with our agricultural lands, and something that we've
5 worked so hard for the last 10 years -- for many years
6 to protect, you should be considering the Cultural
7 Landscape Approach, as required by the National Historic
8 Preservation Act, to look at these farms and ranches and
9 at their impacts, because that pulls together all those
10 different approaches.

11 And you also need to consider -- Chuck
12 mentioned this -- we have some -- a number of Centennial
13 farms and ranches that will be impacted by this, these
14 are ranches that have been in families -- by the same
15 family for over a hundred years -- and my family happens
16 to be one of those -- and those are significant
17 resources, those needs to be considered.

18 Just one other thing. On your 4(f)
19 evaluation -- I realize that you started this process
20 nearly 10 year ago -- but it states that there's little
21 physical evidence of where the Santa Fe Trail existed.
22 Nearly six years ago a project was started to document
23 the Santa Fe Trail and do National Register of
24 Nominations on federal lands and on some of the lands
25 of -- privately-owned lands of people that wanted to do

1 that -- John Martin is certainly one of the areas where
2 there are National Registered segments that have been
3 identified -- I would suggest, considering that that was
4 started over six years ago, that CDOT talk with the
5 SHPO's office and be familiar with the work that's been
6 done, 'cause that was started over six years ago.

7 And that's(sic) my main comments at this
8 point, but I would ask that you extend the review
9 period, please.

10 (Applause.)

11 MR. ROB FREI: Mr. Chris Tomky.

12 MR. CHRIS TOMKY: Hi, my name's Chris Tomky,
13 I'm a fourth generation Colorado farmer, and my fifth
14 generation is sitting right there (indicating).

15 I've lived in Rocky Ford my whole life, and
16 my family and I have spent a lifetime improving the
17 infrastructure of our farms and ranches, and when you
18 take a highway and run it right through the middle of
19 that and you get paid for the land that they take, well,
20 that's fine, but they don't take into consideration now
21 you're cut in half and everything that you worked your
22 life for is now divided, and if there's an exit every
23 mile -- which would be generous -- it's going to double
24 the labor inputs and the cost of production, and it's
25 just going to rip a hole right through this Valley

1 (indicating).

2 And I can tell the thought that they had put
3 into this by cramming us all in the baggage room of the
4 depot instead of giving us the dignity of the community
5 building, which is right over there (indicating).

6 UNIDENTIFIED FEMALE SPEAKER: Yeah.

7 (Applause.)

8 MR. CHRIS TOMKY: And I do own farms and
9 ranches that the highway is going to go through, but
10 it's beyond that, it's for the entire Valley. I get gas
11 at Loaf 'N Jug in my pickup and there's a lot of times
12 that if -- you can't even get in there to get fuel, and
13 that's a good thing, and I don't even recognize anybody
14 who's there, it's all people passing through, and if
15 there's a four-lane highway bypassing everything they're
16 just going to keep their cruise control set and go
17 around into Pueblo, they're not going to take an exit to
18 nowhere, and it's just going to kill this entire Valley
19 that everybody here has worked to preserve. That's all.

20 (Applause.)

21 MR. ROB FREI: Mr. Randall Robertson.

22 MR. RANDALL ROBERTSON: My name is Randall
23 Robertson, I'm from La Junta, I'm a commercial banker in
24 town there.

25 My concerns are similar to everybody else's

1 here. I guess you guys gave some statistics as far as
2 the number of crashes and things like that, and this is
3 to make things safer. I guess I'd like to know where
4 the -- where the crashes are concentrated at, because
5 unless they're right in the middle of our towns I don't
6 see the purpose in bypassing all that, the four-lane
7 will get -- get accomplished --

8 UNIDENTIFIED FEMALE SPEAKER: Right.

9 MR. RANDALL ROBERTSON: -- what you want to
10 accomplish that way.

11 UNIDENTIFIED FEMALE SPEAKER: That's right.
12 Yeah.

13 (Applause.)

14 MR. RANDALL ROBERTSON: The other thing is,
15 is the timesaving to the amount of speed that you can
16 cover the 150 miles in, nowhere here does it estimate
17 what the timesaving is. I can't imagine what it is when
18 you still got to go around the towns instead of going
19 through them to get there, so that's a concern of mine.

20 And, like I say, it -- I'm kind of like
21 everybody else, this thing just jumped up out of
22 nowhere, for all the time that it took for the studying
23 to get to this meeting tonight the public knowledge of
24 it was not very forthcoming on this.

25 Let me get here to see the other questions.

1 (Reviewed document.)

2 I guess I want somebody to define what
3 mobility is to me, I'm -- I'm having difficulty with
4 that, the mobility part. We got -- we got highways just
5 like everybody else does, I don't know what makes them
6 any less mobile than the others. You continually showed
7 tractors there, and things like that, maybe that's the
8 total issue, I don't know. If it is, that's part of
9 the -- the thing around here, if you put a four-lane
10 through obviously that would resolve that issue also.

11 You're going to be taking away the tax
12 base -- of whatever land you're taking out there,
13 whether it be ranchland or farmland, you're taking away
14 the tax base, who's going to maintain the roads that are
15 left? Is that a CDOT thing still, or is it not? You're
16 just adding expense on top of insult to us here in the
17 towns.

18 (Reviewed document.)

19 And the -- you know, I'd just like to say,
20 some of the statistics that you guys are using, you
21 know, they're -- they're -- you're pulling them out of
22 nowhere. If you don't have a concentration of where
23 these accidents are occurring you're making us think
24 that it's in this whole stretch here -- down here
25 through our -- through 50 miles here, and I have -- I

1 have -- I have difficulty believing that.

2 You guys came and spent a couple of million
3 dollars -- I don't have any millions -- out here on 71,
4 never improved. If that's your guys' ideas of improving
5 safety you did not accomplish one thing out there.

6 UNIDENTIFIED FEMALE SPEAKER: Yeah.

7 UNIDENTIFIED FEMALE SPEAKER: That's right.

8 UNIDENTIFIED FEMALE SPEAKER: Woo-hoo.

9 (Applause.)

10 MR. RANDALL ROBERTSON: So once you've lost
11 our trust in something like that -- and I don't know if
12 there was any public comment or anything known, or if
13 that was just something that jumped out of nowhere, but,
14 you -- like I say, the accidents haven't ceased there at
15 all, you -- you accomplished nothing, spent millions,
16 and my guess is that's what this is going to amount to,
17 too.

18 But we thank you for your time coming down,
19 next time get the community building next-door. Thank
20 you.

21 (Applause.)

22 MR. ROB FREI: All right, a Mr. Keith
23 Goodwin.

24 MR. KEITH GOODWIN: My name is Keith Goodwin,
25 Commissioner of Otero County, and I had one concern

1 about the format tonight that I wanted to capitalize on
2 while here, is after this is over and you go back and
3 ask a lot of questions we're all going to lose the
4 answers, and, so, what I'd ask is that the questions
5 that's asked to be sure to write them down so that those
6 answers can be included in the report that's done so we
7 know what the answers are and what the questions were,
8 otherwise we're losing that information. Thank you.

9 (Applause.)

10 MR. ROB FREI: Okay, that's all the names I
11 have on my list right now, is there anybody else that
12 wants to come up that I haven't called yet? She just
13 raised her hand, I'll call you forward. There's one
14 individual.

15 Please come up, I think it's George.

16 MR. GEORGE PFAFF: Yeah. Hi, I'm George
17 Pfaff and I'm from Rocky Ford, and I -- I agree with a
18 lot of naysayers here, I think that we -- the -- the
19 transportation through the area I think is adequate, I
20 mean, I travel up and down there all the time and -- and
21 I never occur any traffic problems or any -- any real
22 major mishaps. Accidents are going to happen whether
23 you want them to or not. I think increasing the -- to a
24 four-lane highway and all these bypasses is only going
25 to create possibly more traffic, and actually more

1 accidents and more fatalities at that rate.

2 I look at these things that are going around
3 town and stuff, that's got to affect the towns and it's
4 going to make it a -- a dead area again, and that -- we
5 want to build instead of take away. And I think people
6 will skip the areas, just like I do when I'm on an
7 interstate, I'll skip areas, too.

8 And the other thing, too, about bypasses,
9 that you got a long mileage down there and that's got to
10 increase the fuel consumption that we're going to be
11 using, and the idea should be to decrease that, or -- or
12 it -- so we're not using so much gas and oil and what
13 have you.

14 And I think another thing, too, is we do have
15 these four lanes going through Manzanola and Rocky Ford,
16 Swink, and all of this, it's already existing, the
17 thing -- we want to increase to four lanes between
18 Pueblo and Fowler, that's fine, but it's -- and I don't
19 mind that at -- at all there, but I -- I -- with the
20 towns where you have to slow down -- you actually are
21 controlling your traffic a little bit when you have
22 these general slowdowns so that traffic is not too
23 speedy, and -- and you can actually probably in --
24 decrease the amount of fatalities and accidents and
25 things like that, I think we do need that kind of

1 control.

2 I mean, to go around town going 75-,
3 80-mile-an-hour, I don't see the advantage of that -- of
4 that, but -- and I think it really should be looked
5 into, especially economic impact I think is going to be
6 very negative to this if we're going to go bypassing the
7 towns.

8 Like I said, we have the four lanes already
9 existing from Manzanola to just past La Junta, I don't
10 see why they can't use that and just do what they need
11 to do in between. Thank you.

12 (Applause.)

13 MR. ROB FREI: Kimmi Lewis.

14 MS. KIMMI LEWIS: Hello, my name is Kimmi
15 Lewis, and I live south of La Junta.

16 And Mrs. Cannon is right, we need some common
17 sense, we don't need any more taking of private property
18 where she lives. Where the Cannon place is is a very
19 nice property, and she doesn't need to be giving it up
20 for a new expressway around the small towns that need
21 the economic development, that need the people to stop.

22 And I'll guarantee you it's just like the
23 town of Boise City, Oklahoma, when you go down to
24 Amarillo, people do not stop there, they go right on by,
25 buzz right by, and they don't stop downtown, and that's

1 what's going to happen here.

2 So four lanes work, if we need more
3 four-lanes then let's look at that for safety, but let's
4 have some common sense.

5 And we do need an extension of time for the
6 comments, and I will make sure that other people ask for
7 that as well, and that's something that you can do, you
8 can write a comment to the DOT and ask for an extension
9 of time.

10 I'm running for House District 64, and I'll
11 guarantee the first thing I will do when I get to the
12 capital is ask for an audit of the DOT. Thank you.

13 UNIDENTIFIED SPEAKER: Woo-hoo.

14 (Applause.)

15 MR. ROB FREI: Come on up.

16 MR. GEORGE HANZAZ: Thank you. My name is
17 George Hanzaz, I grew up in Rocky Ford, lived in
18 Stockton, California, for 23 years, moved back here,
19 it's a great place to live.

20 I've traveled around. I remember back in the
21 '60s, '70s, and into the early '80s High -- Interstate
22 25 bypassed Las Vegas, Nevada. It was complete
23 everywhere else except Las Vegas, Nevada. They had some
24 pow -- someone with power in the state legislature that
25 held that up. So why I'm telling you is Las Vegas,

1 Nevada had a lot of through traffic, everyone went
2 through there, they made money, once you go around --
3 and I've seen this, Interstate 40 through Arizona, a lot
4 of towns have dried up.

5 It's great, it's great to have a better way
6 to get through, four-lane highways are good, but once
7 you bypass towns you start -- from my experience what
8 I've seen you start to take away economic activity.

9 The most important question you can ask
10 tonight is who has the final say about this. These --
11 the -- the company and the DOT people who are here
12 tonight, they do not have the final say, it belongs to
13 either the governor's office, state legis -- or the
14 state legislature, they decide whether the money's spent
15 or not, those are the people you need to talk to. These
16 people here are doing their job in coming here and
17 explaining things to us so we know what the thinking is
18 by the policymakers, and I would ask you that -- take
19 your time and find out the information, but find out who
20 makes the final decision, that's what's really
21 important. Thank you.

22 (Applause.)

23 MR. ROB FREI: We've got a couple more that I
24 see.

25 MR. BRIAN BURNEY: Hi, my name is Brian

1 Burney, I -- I live on the corner -- sort of on the
2 corner of Highway 50 and 71, it's on the west side of
3 Rocky Ford, so I'm familiar with that interchange
4 improvement, and familiar with a lot of those -- those
5 crashes that have happened over my lifetime.

6 But I want to thank you guys for all your
7 hard work, this is a tremendous amount of work that
8 you've put into this since, I don't know, 2004, 2005,
9 2006, something like that. So hats off, really a good
10 job.

11 We have a little bit of fear going on here.
12 We feel like we are Radiator Springs in the movies
13 Car -- Cars, right, and that we're going to get bypassed
14 and that our town's going to die -- or our communities
15 are going to die. That may be true, but what I guess I
16 would challenge us to say -- just like what George just
17 said -- was -- you know, this is a decision that relies
18 upon the governor's office and our legislators, so --
19 we're very passionate here tonight, let's also be
20 passionate in reaching out and writing letters to those
21 folks, but let's be passionate about doing some work
22 here in our own communities throughout the Valley.

23 There's a sign outside of Rocky Ford that now
24 says, "Growing Together," right, and I would challenge
25 each of you that we need to do more growing together as

1 communities, and collaborate together as communities in
2 the Arkansas Valley along the Highway 50 corridor.

3 And I think our county commissioners could
4 tell us that in Otero County we have some divide amongst
5 towns, right, amongst municipalities and how they work
6 together, and, so, I would say that perhaps us working
7 together would help us to solve some of our own problems
8 regardless of what happens with the Highway 50 that goes
9 through, and that -- there was an organization a few
10 years ago I would again -- again encourage all of you to
11 take a look at, I know La Junta has done some good
12 things with a -- an organization called
13 "strongtowns.org," right? They look at problems of
14 small-town America, rural areas, related to civil
15 engineering problems.

16 And, so, I went to a meeting here in Rocky
17 Ford in that government building right over here, and --
18 it was set up over there in that big, large space -- 12
19 people showed up (indicating). Do you know how sad that
20 made me that only 12 people showed up? And none of them
21 had the color hair that I have right here right now.
22 And I don't mean that to be offensive, I mean that to
23 suggest that perhaps we need to take the bull by the
24 horns in our communities, some good things that are
25 said -- said -- being said here, and deal with some of

1 the issues that we're faced with.

2 Main street, right, what do we do about main
3 street rural America. Not just Rocky Ford, or La Junta,
4 or Manzanola, but main street in general. Let's not
5 tackle it as a stand-alone problem, let's tackle it as a
6 -- as a problem that we all endure and -- and figure out
7 how to work together to do community development and
8 things like that (indicating). So strongtowns.org,
9 let's work at growing together.

10 And regardless of what happens here with this
11 let's look at what reality does invite us.

12 I'm going to go back to the Santa Fe Trail as
13 being the thing that guided the railroad through
14 Southeastern Colorado to deliver -- to deliver goods and
15 services, to develop our towns, and it is the thing that
16 divides our towns.

17 Think about when your children are young and
18 you tell them not to cross the railroad tracks, what is
19 the impression that is burned into their brain when
20 they're told not to go over there because they might get
21 injured, because they might die if they cross to that
22 side of town? Ladies and gentlemen, we cannot do
23 anything about the railroad running through each of our
24 communities, right? And Highway 50 was put next to the
25 railroad for convenience sake, who knows why, right?

1 Those -- those are civil engineering things that we
2 cannot fix.

3 And, so -- really if we wanted to fix some of
4 the problems we'd leave Highway 50 where it was and move
5 the railroad, but that would cost billions more I'm sure
6 than building a highway -- a highway from, you know,
7 Pueblo to the Kansas state line.

8 But I just want to point out that that --
9 that really is some of -- a bigger, broader social issue
10 that maybe we need to look at how -- how do we tackle it
11 as community members.

12 Thank you, sir.

13 Some of that -- some of that social issue of
14 divide, 'cause we -- that -- we're responsible for that
15 divide, right, that we have to live with, with things
16 like the railroad, don't cross to the other side.

17 Sorry I went over, thanks.

18 (Applause.)

19 MR. ROB FREI: Thank you.

20 I think I saw one more hand go up, come on.

21 MR. RAY WATTS: My name is Ray Watts, I live
22 in La Junta, and I'm a candidate for County
23 Commissioner.

24 But I want you to take into consideration
25 this phrase, "Get your kicks on Route 66." Not anymore,

1 'cause Route 66 -- partial of it dissolved towns, the
2 towns do not exist, it's Interstate 40 now. I can
3 remember driving when I was a kid, with my parents -- I
4 wasn't driving, they wouldn't let me -- but back in the
5 day Route 66 went from California all the way across to
6 the East Coast, it bypassed a lot of towns when
7 Interstate 40 was built and it drew up all those towns
8 to nothing, there's nothing there, people moved away.
9 So take that in consideration when you look at what
10 they're trying to do here, we could end up being a
11 nothing. A nothing. We don't want that. Thank you.

12 (Applause.)

13 MR. ROB FREI: Is there anyone else that
14 would like to provide a public comment? Yes, please
15 come up.

16 MR. DEVIN CAMACHO: I just want to emphasize
17 again to make sure you speak to your elected officials,
18 especially representatives. Kimmi is right there, she
19 is running for House District 64; you also have -- I am
20 here for Representative Navarro, she'll be more than
21 happy to take any questions you have (indicating). Just
22 make sure you talk to your representatives because,
23 again, they are the ones that appropriate -- appropriate
24 the budget for these things to happen. So thank you.

25 (Applause.)

1 MR. ROB FREI: Is there any -- anyone else?

2 Yes, Elaine.

3 MS. ELAINE STEPHENS: I'm Elaine Stephens,
4 and I live west of Fowler. It's a bad highway there.
5 Where they extended the passing lanes out of Pueblo was
6 wonderful, wonderful, but they did not extend it on down
7 because it's not in the program yet.

8 But I'm right near the High Line Canal
9 bridge, and when I make a left-hand turn coming out of
10 Pueblo I start signaling clear back about a mile before,
11 tapping to let them know that I'm going to make a
12 left-hand turn, then I hit the bridge and guess what,
13 there's traffic coming from the east, so then I have to
14 switch over to the right side. So it's a bad turn for
15 my property, and the ones who live near me.

16 I have seen tractors try to go by there --
17 semis -- and they all have to go to the center of that
18 little bridge.

19 How many of you drive to Pueblo? A lot.

20 Sure. It's really dangerous there.

21 68th Lane has a bad curve, too, that you
22 can't(sic) hardly see when you're looking for traffic.

23 So I'd like you to consider that area from
24 Pueblo to -- to Fowler. A lot of people live in the
25 Valley and drive to Pueblo to work, I have a lot of

1 friends who do, and I am concerned for the safety of
2 people on that lane -- or on that part of the highway.

3 I appreciate all the work you do 'cause
4 you've got your job cut out, it's a bad one. Thank you.

5 (Applause.)

6 MR. ROB FREI: Is there anyone else?

7 (No response.)

8 MR. ROB FREI: Okay. Thank you.

9 For those that did not sign up I'll ask that
10 you go in the back and please sign your name here just
11 so we can keep a registry of it as well.

12 Thank you, and -- and we'll be available till
13 8:00 tonight. Thank you.

14 (Presentation was concluded.)

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1 PRIVATE COMMENTS WERE TAKEN BY COURT REPORTER AS
2 FOLLOWS:

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4 MS. DOROTHY MUTH: Okay, I got in it for the
5 very last of this, but I been to the other one and I
6 been talking to someone, what you were saying here is
7 exactly what you were saying at the other one. How do
8 you --

9 THE COURT REPORTER: I'm sorry?

10 MS. DOROTHY MUTH: I got to figure out how to
11 put this without sounding . . .

12 I think bypassing the towns is going to kill
13 the towns.

14 And 50 years ago, when I was a kid, I
15 remember you guys taking the land from the ranchers
16 down -- all the way down Highway 50 and promising them a
17 four-lane highway at that time, 50 years ago I remember
18 that, and I think that's what you ought to stick with
19 instead of taking land -- more land from the ranchers
20 and doing them all in. That's my -- my spiel on it.

21 This going around, you're going to kill the
22 towns, and -- and all we need is a four-lane highway,
23 and I don't think you -- we're giving it all to Colorado
24 Springs and Denver.

25 And Pueblo, that one interchange that you

1 guys keep changing every five years, and -- anyway --
2 sorry. That's good.

3 * * * * *

4 MS. SHIRLEY HERMAN: I just wanted to make
5 sure that when aligning this if they've already deleted
6 a certain area that it doesn't come back without our
7 noticing and causing problems with our water companies.

8 We have a domestic rural water company that
9 is along the -- okay, it's along an eliminated roadway.
10 As a small, domestic, rural water company, our water
11 plant and all the wells are alongside of the roadway, it
12 would be devastating to all of our customers to the
13 south of Rocky Ford if something were to happen to our
14 water company.

15 * * * * *

16 MR. GALE BUTLER: Anyhow, we got a dummy
17 named Ken that's a architect, and he's up there on the
18 project on the river -- Arkansas River and screwing
19 everything up.

20 You notice when you come through Fowler,
21 Colorado, that big, wide spot in the highway where you
22 can't get a truck -- a semi around the corner to go
23 across the river or go somewhere else, he designed the
24 common curb out in the middle of the highway.

25 And then you got a project here in Manzano --

1 nola, a parking lot he designed, you can't get a
2 full-size pickup in it because he figured, well, we
3 don't have big pickups anymore.

4 And then you come down here to the Armory in
5 Rocky Ford, Colorado, he designed that, and the water's
6 supposed to drain to the south, and what does it do, it
7 drains into the building.

8 And then the WW Feeds in La Junta, he come in
9 there and he cost the company 1500 -- 15 yards of
10 concrete because he overkilled the foundation for a
11 floor, a 40-by-60 building that they just going to store
12 feed in. He thought they were going to park railroad
13 trucks -- or trains in there.

14 And then -- and then on the -- on the
15 highways, when they make the transitions from the
16 bridges to the asphalt they can seem to never jive, they
17 always three or four inches off, 'cause you go across
18 the road whap, whap, whap.

19 And then when it comes to patching and
20 repairing they don't do a good job. This outfit out of
21 Can -- Canon City, it installed a -- they did a job on
22 266, the State finally had to come out and redo it for
23 them.

24 Oh, and another deal a kid -- a kid did, he
25 designed a deal out here at Highway 50 and 71 where that

1 barrier was, when you leaving to go back to Pueblo or
2 you going tonight you'll see they had to saw it because
3 the traffic couldn't see over that, then these small
4 cars -- they had several wrecks on account of that
5 because, duh, we didn't savvy what was going on.

6 We sit in the office and don't get -- come
7 down to the job site to see what's happening, so that's
8 the main problem.

9 (End of private comments.)

10 (The proceedings were concluded at the hour
11 of 7:20 p.m.)

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TIER 1 DRAFT ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACT STATEMENT

PUBLIC HEARING

July 13, 2016

5:30 p.m.

Southeastern Colorado Heritage Center
201 West "B" Street
Pueblo, Colorado 81003

1 MR. DAHLKE: All right. If you would like to
2 take a seat we're going to get started with our
3 presentation tonight.

4 My name's Dan Dahlke, I'm a resident Engineer
5 with the Colorado Department of Transportation here out
6 of Pueblo, I've been working on this project for about
7 two years; and I'll let Rob introduce himself now
8 (indicating).

9 MR. ROB FREI: So I'm Rob Frei, I'm the
10 Region 2 Environmental and Planning Manager, and I've
11 been working on this project for about two-and-a-half
12 years.

13 MR. DAN DAHLKE: All right, a little bit
14 about tonight's meeting. If you would like to look at
15 the document, the document's out in the hallway, there's
16 a hard copy of it, we do not have copies to hand out,
17 it's a fairly large document (indicating).

18 If you would like to review it additionally
19 there -- we have it in our office here in Pueblo, and
20 it's also in libraries throughout the whole corridor, so
21 if you would like a list of where it's located let us
22 know and we can steer you toward that.

23 There's also comment forms out in the
24 hallway, if you would like to provide a written comment
25 go ahead, fill it out, and put it in the box. You also

1 can get online and fill out an electronic form, or also
2 send an e-mail to an e-mail address that is down at the
3 bottom (indicating). We will also have this posted at
4 the end of the presentation.

5 After the presentation we'll also allow you
6 to give a verbal comment, which Rob will go into more
7 specifics at the end of that presentation of how to do
8 that.

9 So now we'll jump into project history. The
10 Corridor Selection Study was the beginning stages for
11 developing a corridor-wide vision for the future highway
12 to improve safety and mobility in local -- the local
13 Arkansas Valley. The study concluded that the
14 transportation improvements are needed along US 50, and
15 recommend the corridor be environmentally reviewed under
16 a Tier 1 level En -- Environmental Impact Assessment.
17 The Tier 1 EIS began in 2006.

18 A little bit of the schedule. A Notice of
19 Intent for the project was published in January of 2006,
20 scoping and public meetings were conducted in February
21 2006, and an Alternatives Evaluation was conducted and
22 documented in the Tier 1 Draft EIS which was released in
23 June of 2016.

24 The public will review and comment on the
25 document for a 30-day period beginning in June -- and

1 actually that is -- we actually changed that to a 40-day
2 period, and currently will end on Feb -- or July 29th.

3 The decision in the combined Tier 1 Final EIS
4 and Record of Decision, once approved by the Federal
5 Highway Administration, will be complete -- will
6 complete the Tier 1 EIS. As funding becomes available
7 for projects within the corridor a Tier 2 NEPA document
8 will be prepared.

9 Since the US 50 corridor is from Pueblo all
10 the way to Kansas funding will not be available all at
11 once to implement improvements for the entire corridor
12 all at once.

13 The Tiered NEPA process allows CDOT to
14 environmentally analyze current and future funding when
15 it becomes available. Studying the entire corridor at
16 once gives CDOT a better understanding of mitigation
17 strategies, and the ability to maximize financial
18 investments for mitigation efforts corridor-wide.

19 Using the Tiered NEPA process allows
20 environmental analysis to shape the transportation
21 planning decisions, along with input from agencies and
22 you, the local public.

23 The corridor that this study looks at is from
24 US 50 east from Pueblo to the vicinity of the Kansas
25 state line, which is approximately 150 miles long. It's

1 a major local, regional, and national corridor serving
2 east/west travel throughout the local -- Lower Arkansas
3 Valley, Southern Colorado, and beyond. The corridor
4 links two major north/south transportation routes of
5 I-25 and US 287. It also currently serves as the main
6 street for nine local communities in Southeast Colorado.

7 The Tier 1 NEPA study used a study area of
8 approximately 1 to 4 miles wide for the entire 150-mile
9 wide corridor from Pueblo all the way to Kansas. The US
10 287/US 50 reliever route was studied separately in the
11 US 287 at Lamar Reliever Route EA. The reliever route
12 study analyzed US 287 routes that go around the
13 community, so we excluded that from this project.

14 Purpose of the project. The purpose for the
15 proposed improvements along US 50 corridor is to improve
16 safety and mobility for all users. Safety data compiled
17 from 2008 to 2012 showed approximately 330 crashes
18 annually from Pueblo to the Kansas line. This crash
19 data observed showed the corridor to be relatively
20 higher compared to other state averages of similar
21 corridors. Several factors are likely to contribute to
22 this, including limited passing opportunities, frequent
23 changes in road design characteristics, and in --
24 inadequate clear zones.

25 For mobility, inadequate mobility along the

1 corridor has been cited as a factor that limits economic
2 development. Inadequate mobility is likely caused by
3 conflicting needs of the local, regional, and
4 long-distance users, as -- as well as numerous
5 uncontrolled access points along the corridor. This
6 project seeks to improve mobility for all users by
7 balancing mobility and access needs, while also
8 providing flexibility for future travel needs.

9 So -- next slide. Next.

10 For alternative screening, the alternative
11 developed process involved using transportation
12 engineering and environmental criteria to evaluate
13 potential transportation solutions. Each of the
14 criteria was directly related to the purpose and need of
15 the project. The screening process followed four steps
16 which are outlined through the following questions.

17 For the first step we looked at a regional
18 level where would the transportation improvements be
19 made. We looked at a north corridor, which was 1 to 10
20 miles north of the existing alignment, we looked at the
21 existing alignment, and, then, we also looked at south
22 options, which ranged from 1 to 10 miles south of the
23 existing alignment. The existing corridor was selected
24 based on the location better serving local and regional
25 users.

1 The next step we took was what types or modes
2 of transportation improvements would meet the needs of
3 the corridor, so we looked at rail, bus, carpooling,
4 which included transportation system management, and
5 also just the highway. The rail, bus, carpooling and
6 transportation safety management strategies failed to
7 address safety issues, mobility for any user, and
8 provided flexibility for fu -- and provide flexibility
9 for future traffic needs. The highway option was
10 carried forward because it fully addressed all the
11 needs.

12 The third step we took, and the question that
13 we asked was, what type of facility would meet -- meet
14 the needs of the corridor. So we looked at a two-lane
15 highway with passing lanes, we looked at a four-lane
16 highway, we looked at a four-lane rural expressway, and,
17 then, we also looked at a four-lane freeway.

18 The facility types without median refuge,
19 which the two-lane options and the four-lane highway
20 option didn't provide, would not improve the ability for
21 local users to cross or turn left onto the highway, a
22 four-lane freeway would severely limit the number of
23 locations -- or crossings of the -- the locals could
24 access, for these reasons the four-lane highway -- or
25 the four-lane expressway -- pardon me -- was identified

1 as the preferred facility to be carried forward.

2 The fourth step we took to -- took a look at
3 was through town or around town, and the question we
4 asked was would transportation improvements be made
5 through the communities, or along the corridor, or
6 around them.

7 So the through-town corridors were eliminated
8 from consideration because of the impact it would have
9 to local mobility, balance mobility for all users, and
10 flexibility to meet future traffic needs; the
11 around-town corridors would better meet the project
12 purpose and need, and minimize community impacts.

13 For alternatives evalua -- evaluated, in
14 accordance with NEPA a no-build alternative is included
15 to provide a basis for comparison with the build
16 alternatives. For this project the no-build alternative
17 includes ongoing maintenance of pavement and bridges on
18 the existing US 50 alignment; it also includes planning
19 minor safety improvements, provisions of passing lanes,
20 routine pavement overlays, repair of any weather- or
21 crash-related damage, and also accommodates local agency
22 improvements to the US 50 corridor.

23 Selection of the preferred alternative. The
24 preferred around-town route was based on the Effects
25 Analysis conducted for three environmental categories:

1 rural and agricultural, natural, and community and
2 built. Consideration for the quantity of resources
3 impacted, along with the quality, allowed the study to
4 determine the significance of the impact. The results
5 of the study led to recommendations on the corridor
6 locations around each of the communities.

7 So we're going to look at Pueblo County. So
8 in Pueblo County the first built alternative we had was
9 in Pueblo, and we had three options, we had the Pueblo
10 Airport north, the 47 connection, and the Pueblo
11 existing alignment. The existing section of US 50 in
12 Pueblo is already a developed transportation corridor,
13 while the other alternatives would fragment agriculture
14 and prairie habitat. Due to the significantly less
15 impacts the existing alignment would have compared to
16 the other built alternatives the existing alignment is
17 preferred along the US 50 section.

18 The next section we have is Pueblo to Fowler.
19 So we had the -- "Fort Reynolds" is what we're calling
20 it. So we had the Fort Reynolds existing alignment or
21 the Fort Reynolds realignment, which is also the
22 Boone(sic) -- Boone turnoff. Both alignments have
23 similar impacts to rural and agricultural environment,
24 and the natural environment, the difference is
25 Alternative 2, which is the Fort Reynolds realignment,

1 would improve safety and minimize potential impacts to
2 the community and built environment, leading this
3 alternative to be identified as the preferred
4 alternative.

5 Next, in Otero County we had the Fowler north
6 and the Fowler south, and you'll notice both lines are
7 green. Alternative 1 would have fewer impacts on
8 agriculture, while Alternative 2 would have fewer
9 impacts to the natural environment, and each has
10 comparable effects on the community and built
11 environment. Since both have tradeoffs no alternative
12 was identified in Fowler, and both will be carried
13 forward to a Tier 2 analysis.

14 In Manzanola we had a north and a south
15 alternative, both alternatives were fairly comparable,
16 however, Alternative 1 would result in fewer potential
17 effects to agricultural productivity, and in the
18 community and built environment.

19 In Rocky Ford we also had a north and a south
20 alignment, the north has a higher potential to -- or has
21 a greater potential to minimize effects to historic
22 resources, and received greater community support during
23 the process, and because the route is closer to the town
24 of Rocky Ford.

25 In Swink we had a north and a south alignment

1 as well, both alternatives were comparable in their
2 ability to meet the purpose and need of the project, and
3 both had their advantages to the town of Swink. No
4 preferred route was selected for this location, and just
5 like in Fowler both of them move forward with the Tier 2
6 study.

7 In La Junta we had four options, we had La
8 Junta north and, then, we had three options to the
9 south, each one a little bit further away from town. La
10 Junta north would result in the most
11 environmentally-damaging route because it would require
12 construction through a major floodplain, it was also
13 eliminated from consideration because the three oth --
14 other south alternatives would generate a lack of major
15 adverse impacts. Alternative 2 is the preferred because
16 it's the shortest, closest to town, and better meets the
17 purpose and need of the project.

18 In Bent County we had Las Animas north and
19 Las Animas south. Las Animas north has major access
20 advantages that could alleviate potential socioeconomic
21 effects of a bypass, combined with the lesser
22 environmental impacts of the two alternatives.
23 Alternative 1 was identified as the preferred
24 alternative.

25 And in Lamar, as mentioned before the 287/US

1 50 reliever route was already studied and, so -- that
2 goes around the community, so that was excluded.

3 In Granada we had a north and a south option,
4 the south option was identified as the preferred
5 alternative because it has slightly fewer natural and
6 community and built impacts.

7 In Holly also had a north and a south route.
8 The south route was identified as a preferred
9 alternative because it has fewer environmental impacts
10 to the natural, and community and built environments;
11 also it improves access from State Highway 89 to US 50,
12 and vice-versa.

13 So benefits of the project. The project
14 improvements will address the existing concerns
15 throughout the corridor as previously mentioned, and
16 offers the following benefits: increased safety,
17 increased mobility for all users, increased passing
18 opportunities with -- in -- two lanes in each direction,
19 and improve shoulders that will meet current FHWA
20 standards, and fewer speed reductions, and faster travel
21 times throughout the corridor.

22 Rob's going to take over.

23 MR. ROB FREI: Thanks, Dan.

24 So up here on the slide you can see that we
25 looked at kind of four different categories of -- of

1 resources and we separated them into agricultural,
2 built -- community and built environment, natural
3 environment, and, then, other resources that didn't fit
4 into those categories real well, so I'll be going over
5 those with you in just a moment.

6 On this next slide to help you understand how
7 we came up with a -- the amount of potential impacts
8 along the corridor we put a graphic up here. So for
9 resources like wetlands, farm -- farmlands, agricultural
10 lands, the -- the project corridor alignment is about
11 1,000 feet along the 150-mile long section of US 50, but
12 when we actually do the -- the build-out of -- of the
13 project we're only going to need about 250 feet, so what
14 we did was we just calculated the total acreage of that
15 resource and then just multiplied by .25 to come up with
16 a number.

17 Please keep in mind that this is a worst-case
18 scenario, that when we actually get into final design,
19 you know -- for example, if this was a wetland there
20 could be an alternative where we could avoid or minimize
21 impacts to that resource, and that would be considered
22 at the Tier 2 level.

23 So the first set of resources we'll talk
24 about is -- is agricultural impacts. There are four
25 feedlots, six produce markets, 24 irrigation ditches and

1 canals along the corridor; there are also -- for
2 farmlands there's a -- a range from 2,866 acres to 3,047
3 acres; and the same thing with ranchlands, it's 1,790 to
4 2,380 acres. And the reason there's a range there is
5 simply because -- as Dan discussed -- we still haven't
6 determined whether or not -- we haven't identified --
7 identified a preferred alternative at Fowler and Swink,
8 so that's why there's a range there.

9 And, again, please keep in mind that this is
10 over the 150-mile long corridor.

11 Natural environment impacts. We have wetland
12 and riparian, 587 acres to 713 acres. Most of that
13 is -- is riparian habitat. We did not do a full wetland
14 delineation at the Tier 1 level, so those numbers could
15 be refined further, and, again, we would take
16 opportunities to -- to reduce our impacts where --
17 wherever we could.

18 Wildlife habitat, 4,287 acres to 4,564 acres.
19 What that includes is -- is really a combination of --
20 of the rangelands that provide wildlife habitat, it's
21 the wetland riparian areas we've identified, and, then,
22 there's a -- a few state wildlife areas along the
23 corridor that we will be impacting along the way, so
24 that acreage is included there as well.

25 For the geological and paleontological

1 resources there are four mining operations, they consist
2 of sand and gravel quarries along the corridor, and,
3 then, we also have identified six geological formations
4 along the corridor. At this moment we don't know of any
5 known paleontological resources along the corridor, but
6 as is often the case you don't discover them until you
7 start digging or start construction, so -- but we've
8 identified what those high-risk areas are.

9 Community and built environment. There are
10 60 to 79 historic resources along the corridor. So for
11 these type of resources you can't really impact just
12 a quarter -- 25 percent of -- of the given resource, so
13 if that resource was within that 1,000-foot corridor it
14 was included as -- as potentially being impacted.

15 So of those 60 to 79 historic resources, 24
16 of those are irrigation canals that we've determined to
17 be potentially eligible along the corridor, and we also
18 have 14 to 17 bridges that are on US 50 that are also
19 identified as being potentially eligible as well.

20 We also have two long linear resources, we
21 have the Santa Fe Trail that parallels much of US 50,
22 and, then, also the BNSF Railroad.

23 And then the remainder of resources include
24 businesses, primary residences, and outbuildings
25 associated with potentially eligible historic ranches.

1 The archaeological resources. We've
2 identified nine known archaeological sites along the
3 corridor, they are located through two corridor
4 segments, one's between Pueblo and Fowler, and the other
5 one's between La Junta and Las Animas; and, again, we'll
6 make efforts to avoid impacts to those wherever
7 available.

8 Land use, there are 13 conservation easements
9 along the corridor and 10 public properties. The public
10 properties consist of a few state wildlife areas, the
11 John Martin Reservoir, the golf course in Fowler, two
12 pedes -- two pedestrian trails that are proposed in
13 Granada and Holly; and, then, also includes potential
14 impact -- indirect impacts to the Comanche National
15 Grasslands, to Boggsville National Historic Site, and,
16 then, Old Bent's Fort. Indirect impacts to those would
17 be potential changes in access getting to those areas.

18 And then park lands and recreational, again
19 it's -- it's the Fowler golf course, John Martin
20 Reservoir, the state wildlife areas, the trails that we
21 discussed; it also includes four birding trails that use
22 US 50 that the Colorado Division of Wildlife has
23 identified.

24 So transportation or other resources, the
25 first one there is transportation. Dan went over the

1 purpose and need for this project, and that's wha --
2 obviously if -- if we were to implement this project
3 we'd increase the mobility and safety along that
4 corridor, so it would be a pos -- a positive benefit.

5 The hazardous materials. There's 162
6 hazardous material sites known along the corridor, that
7 will change as we move forward. Hazardous material
8 sites can range from, you know, a -- a Wal-Mart that
9 carries household products to a fueling station to a
10 farmer co-op along the corridor, so that -- that kind of
11 gives you a sense of -- of what sort of sites we're
12 looking at.

13 And then Section 4(f) is a
14 transportation-specific law regulation that we -- that
15 provides additional protection to public parks and
16 rec -- public park and recreation resources, and then
17 provides additional protection to historic and
18 archaeological resources as well.

19 So minimally impacted resources, we have
20 environmental justice, water quality, global climate
21 change, aesthetic and visual, air quality, traffic
22 noise, and energy.

23 Social and economic conditions. At this
24 level -- at the Tier 1 document level, without further
25 design we don't fully know what those impacts will be,

1 they'll be reviewed in -- in much further detail at the
2 Tier 2 level process, so maybe not the best to put it on
3 that slide as minimally impacted, but that's something
4 we'll need to take a bigger look at as we move forward.

5 So next steps, I'm going to kind of reiterate
6 what -- what Dan went over at the beginning of the
7 presentation.

8 So comments received tonight throughout the
9 review period will be considered and responded to in the
10 Tier 1 FEIS and Record of Decision, once we complete
11 that we can move into the Tier 2 NEPA documents for each
12 individual project, these could range from categorical
13 exclusions for improvements between towns potentially to
14 larger documents like EAs or potential EISes for
15 around-town routes; and, then, once those are complete
16 we'll move forward into project final design and
17 construction.

18 So if you have comments tonight there's
19 various ways again to provide those to us. One way is
20 after this presentation you can have an opportunity to
21 come up here and give a public comment formally. If you
22 choose to do that we'll ask that you go over to the
23 table over where you signed in and actually sign up, so
24 we'll do that in about five minutes after this
25 presentation is completed (indicating).

1 You can also speak your comments privately to
2 the transcriber, or court reporter, over here as well
3 (indicating).

4 You can also provide written comments
5 tonight. There's a comment box when you came into
6 the -- to the hearing, there's comment forms and pens,
7 you can provide a comment tonight, or you can take one
8 of those comment forms and mail or e-mail those to us,
9 and we have the information on the next slide on -- on
10 that one (indicating). Two slides from now.

11 If you want to provide a verbal comment
12 tonight, again, please add your name to the speaker
13 list.

14 Please wait for me to -- to recognize you
15 and, then, we'll -- I'll call you up, I'll ask you to
16 clearly state your full name and -- and where you're
17 from.

18 We have a three-minute limit for -- for
19 verbal comments, deferring verbal comments -- time is --
20 is not allowed; and, of course, please be respectful
21 with your comments.

22 And this final slide here has a project
23 website that you can go to if you want to review the
24 document online or have additional -- see additional
25 information detail, and you can e-mail your -- your

1 comments to the e-mail address there at
2 atkinsglobal.com, and, then, there's also a mailing
3 address as well.

4 So that concludes this portion of it, we'll
5 do the public hearing portion here in just a few
6 minutes. Thank you.

7 (A break was taken.)

8 MR. ROB FREI: So if I can have your
9 attention real quick. Excuse me, real quick.

10 So I just want to make sure -- nobody has
11 signed up for a formal public comment statement, I just
12 want to make sure that's the case. So I'm not seeing
13 anybody that wants to get up here, so we'll go ahead and
14 close this portion of it. Thank you.

15 We'll be available here if anybody has
16 questions. Thank you.

17 (A break was taken.)

18 MR. ROB FREI: So we do have one individual
19 that wants to come up and provide comments, and we'll
20 let him do that here real quick. So just ask you to
21 come on the other side of the mike --

22 MR. JASON MUNOZ: Sure.

23 MR. ROB FREI: -- and we'll give you three
24 minutes, we'll have a timer set up here to kind of help
25 you gauge your -- your time, so thank you.

1 MR. JASON MUNOZ: Thank you.

2 MR. LUKAS SCHROEDER: State your full name
3 and where you're from.

4 MR. JASON MUNOZ: My name is Jason Munoz,
5 Pueblo, Colorado. I don't expect to take all three
6 minutes, but I just want to say as a citizen I think
7 that this project is crucially important to the --
8 Southern Colorado and -- corridor going from Pueblo to
9 Kansas, and I -- I support it.

10 I would like to go on record saying that I
11 would like to see, particularly in Otero County, the
12 corridor that goes through the communities to stay as
13 they are, there's just so much social and economic
14 impacts that would be affected if the Highway 50 were to
15 go south or north of those communities.

16 That's pretty much it, thank you.

17 MR. ROB FREI: Thank you.

18 Is anyone else interested in providing a
19 public comment?

20 (No response.)

21 MR. ROB FREI: Okay, thank you.

22 (The proceedings were concluded at the hour
23 of 6:10 p.m.)

24 * * * * *

25

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